What's Wrong With Marxism?

Volume II

On Peasants and Workers in India and Indonesia

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PREFACE

This book concludes my efforts since the early seventies to study what the experiences from Communist-led political struggles in Indonesia and India tell us about theoretical and analytical problems of a Marxist understanding of post-colonial societies. There have been two earlier books — *Dilemmas of Third World Communism: The Destruction of the PKI in Indonesia*, London: Zed Books, 1984; and *What's Wrong with Marxism? — on Capitalists and State in India and Indonesia*, New Delhi: Manohar publications, 1989 — but I believe the present book can be read independently of its predecessors. Lack of time and capacity has forced me to change my original plan to include a comparison also with the Philippines and to write instead a separate and less comprehensive essay on "Communists and Democracy in the Philippines" (manuscript 1990). And for the same reasons I can, unfortunately, only say that I hope to be able to write a book where the main results are summarised in a more popular way.

The initial study of the destruction of the PKI in Indonesia was financed mainly by Uppsala University and the Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries (SAREC). The comparison with India (and the Philippines) has been sponsored jointly by the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation and the Swedish Council for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. I have also been able to use most of my time as assistant professor at the Uppsala Department of Political Science for research. I am most thankful for this support, not only for the resources but also for the understanding.

In doing the research on the PKI, I was intellectually supported and stimulated through contacts with a vast number of colleagues, comrades and friends mainly in Scandinavia, Holland, Australia, and Indonesia. Many of them have helped me also during my attempts to follow up the earlier study before I turned to the comparison with India. I shall not mention names here. A relatively comprehensive list is found in the preface and the list of references in the book on the PKI, as well as in a preliminary research report from 1984 (*Struggle for Democracy — A New Option in Indonesia?*, AKUT-series no. 33).

When I turned from Indonesia to India in 1984-85, invaluable introductory help was given to me, once again, by a vast number of colleagues, comrades, and friends mainly in Scandinavia and India. Through them I was also able to benefit from contacts with other knowledgeable researchers and activists. Many names were mentioned in the preface and in the list of references in the first volume of *What's Wrong with Marxism?* Additional names are included in the list of interviews in the present volume.

Many of these people have also contributed important comments on preliminary manuscripts; as have the publishers and those who had the painstaking task of making my English reasonably readable.

Since the early seventies I have, finally, had the privilege of working and in a way living with interested and knowledgeable friends and concerned scholars within and in contact with the AKUT research collective.

Firstly, I can only thank all of you for this (plus Patrik and Felix for "disturbing" but also beginning to understand why I am not always listening or even present in Uppsala) and, secondly, ask the reader to remember that I myself remain solely responsible for all the shortcomings. In order not to hide who is saying what in the book, I have deliberately chosen to write in the first rather than the third person.

Uppsala, Autumn 1989 and Spring 1990

Olle Törnquist

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This book is the second of the two about relations between Marxist theory and practice in India and Indonesia. (The first report was called *What's Wrong with Marxism?—On Capitalists and State in India and Indonesia,* Manohar Publications, New Delhi, 1989.) An additional brief comparison with the Philippines will follow separately.

Various political theses in South and Southeast Asia have emerged on the basis of, among other things, the use of Marxist theory. I distinguish and classify old as well as new schools of thought of importance for actual developments according to the driving social forces that are stressed and which are fundamental for forecasts and political recommendations.

In my earlier book I concentrated on ideas about capitalists and the state as driving social forces in post-colonial India and Indonesia, and the various attempts to apply them. These ideas were originally based on the Communist conclusion from the early twenties that the bourgeoisie, with the nation state that it might create, was the essential social force "in the East"—as long as it tried to develop capitalism through a radical change of the structure of power by fighting against so-called feudal and imperialist forces, and not adapting to them.

Three main interpretations of this school of thought became decisive after independence. According to the first, a so-called national bourgeoisie was given prime importance because capitalist development in general was taken to be blocked by imperialism and feudalism. The second position held that progressive forces within independent post-colonial state apparatuses might be able to shoulder the historical mission of the weak bourgeoisie and carry out a "non-capitalist development". The third position maintained that either the so-called big capitalists or the bureaucrat capitalists dominated the state and had to be fought.

In the present book, peasants and workers are in focus. The peasants' struggle—which is analysed in Part One—became historically decisive when Mao was looking for an alternative basis after the Kuomintang repression in the late twenties. He quietly abandoned Stalin's prescriptions and transcended the old ideas of looking for support only among the peasantry to stress upon them and their anti-feudal

interests as a new driving social force, provided they were properly led by a party guided by the interests of the working class. Only thereafter did he advance into conditional co-operation with sections of the bourgeoisie.

I begin the book by concentrating on two post-colonial interpretations of this general thesis. The first position is called peasants versus landlords. The bourgeois forces are incapable of implementing an anti-feudal land reform. Thus it must be enforced, not least by the peasants themselves. According to a second and more extreme interpretation, there is a need for an armed rural revolution against the political bastions of the landlords before socio-economic changes are possible. Following this interpretation, I highlight the more recent rural conflicts which various movements and organisations are directing against the state-led expansion of capitalism rather than against landlords or big farmers.

Some aspects of workers' struggle are discussed in Part Two. Workers' interests have always been crucial for political Marxists, but weak industrial development has usually caused them to emphasise progressive capitalists, state-led transitions and/or the peasants' struggle. My point of departure is, however, the idea among some post-colonial radicals that the changing international division of labour, and proletarianisation as well as industrialisation within their own countries, calls for a political Marxism that gives priority to the workers as the new driving social force.

My main question is this: what do the experiences from these Communist-led political struggles tell us about theoretical and analytical problems of Marxism?

The approach is similar to that applied in my first book. The basic elements are as follows: struggles for radical change are social projects that may have intellectual components. Drawing on Robert Brenner,[1] among others, I would maintain that classes are mainly interested in reproducing themselves and their positions. From the point of view of such class interests, radical changes are, thus, an unintended effect. Consequently, a revolution, for example, may occur without or despite political guidance.

However, I am one of those political scientists who are mainly interested in, if and how people attempt to transcend this "irrationality" of historical change. They could do so by understanding how their societies work, and by using political instruments to plan and struggle for a better life, rather than by only securing their reproduction.

Marxist theory and analyses may, therefore, be used to make political forecasts, to identify driving social and political forces, to propose alliances and to formulate strategies, etc. Such broad guidelines are necessary, although not sufficient preconditions for success in conscious attempts to change societies.

My purpose here is not to test the inner logic of Marxist theories, nor to test their descriptive and explanatory power in concrete settings. It is rather to scrutinise their applicability with regard to the transition of post-colonial societies. That is, their fruitfulness as a basis for such forecasts and guidance which constitute the intellectual foundation for radical policies. Any problems that are thus identified may also be used in order to further develop the theories.

Or, to put it differently, the most common approach would have been to test the explanatory power of relevent Marxist theories in some concrete settings. For instance, one could have applied Marxist theories about class and agriculture to an analysis of the socio-economic structure in some selected rural area. By doing this, one would have been able to demonstrate that certain decisive tendencies are difficult to explain within the framework of available Marxist theories. One could then have proceeded by suggesting supplementary theoretical elements, or, if necessary, alternative theories, in order to take the lost factors into due consideration. One could finally have concluded by testing the explanatory power of these new analytical tools. However, this is *not* what I am going to do. As a political scientist I will instead start on the level of political action. I will make use of the fact that Marxist theories are meant not only to explain the world, but also to guide attempts at consciously changing it. Hence, I will test the explanatory power of relevant existing Marxist theories by examining to what extent they have proved politically fruitful. Have they been efficient as instruments with which one can predict the main course of development, identify friends and enemies, and plan political actions? The outcome of important political struggles which have been reasonably consistently guided by these theories indicate what the actors have not been able to take into consideration with the use of their analytical approach. I will then suggest supplementary theoretical elements which make it possible to describe and explain these previously neglected factors. And I will finally try to make use of the new analytical tools.

Initially the design of the present book is the same as in the first. In Chapter One I distinguish between various interpretations and strategies which follow from the general idea of peasants versus landlords and which have been of decisive importance in India and

Indonesia. These interpretations and strategies are then evaluated by way of juxtaposing them with results and actual developments. Did reality confirm forecasts, recommendations and calculated results?[2]

This evaluation makes it possible to identify decisive tendencies in the actual development of the societies which was difficult to foresee and take into due consideration by the predominant use of Marxism. In Chapter Two I therefore study to what extent some other approaches can help us to further develop alternative theoretical and analytical tools. Finally, I advance my own contribution in the form of a supplementary theoretical proposition.

Thereafter the design is altered. Does my theoretical proposition make sense? In Chapter Three I continue by taking it as a point of departure for analysing the extreme Maoist thesis about a rural political revolution. In Chapter Four my supplementary theoretical ideas are used as a framework for analysing the recent rural protests against the state. I also use my conceptualisation to advance a critique of two debates about the role and character of these protests.

A similar approach is employed in Part Two on the workers' struggle, but here I also try to employ additional theoretical propositions which were advanced in the first book about struggles in relation to capitalists and the state.

Finally, Part Three is an attempt to summarise and draw conclusions from both the books about "what's wrong with Marxism?".

NOTES

1. Brenner(1986).
2. I study what actually happened with a general Marxist perspective. This is not only because it suits me fine, but mainly because such an approach does not, by definition, produce results that differ from those of the Communists. I frequently use the Communists' own concepts, not for analytical purposes but only as objects to be evaluated. My analytical tools for this evaluation are mainly the categorisation of communist theses. I concentrate on nine basic arguments and ask a limited amount of researchable questions in relation to them. Finally, I draw mainly on comparatively undisputed common scientific literature, supplemented by some sources related to the organisations plus interviews. I am most thankful to all those who have been kind enough to share their analyses with me. (In addition to this I frequently refer to my previous studies when I discuss Indonesia, and supplement only with references to new relevant research published subsequently.) The merit of this is not new empirical results but, hopefully, the interpretation of old ones, the arguments presented and the comparative perspective.
   For an additional discussion about the problems of presentation due to the approach and design, please see the introductory text in the earlier book.

PART I

PEASANTS' STRUGGLE

In what way did political Marxists in South and Southeast Asia interpret and adapt the thesis about the peasantry as a driving social force to their own post-colonial societies? What conclusions did they arrive at? What forecasts did they make? What strategies did they try to implement? What problems did they meet and what are the implications for theory and analysis?

In concrete politics, the idea about the prime importance of the peasants has been advocated most consistently and most successfully by the Chinese and the Vietnamese. However, the cases of Indonesia and India offer a more complete picture. Most of the internationally predominant interpretations of the general thesis have been applied in these two countries. And at present the most interesting ideas about peasants' struggle against state-led post-colonial capitalism are well represented.

A comparative study of the Indian and Indonesian experiences should be fruitful. As will be shown, the problems of their respective peasants' struggles are quite similar. But as we all know the two societies are very different. A comparison may therefore indicate what common problems are related to the different societies and which ones can be explained with similarities, by use of the comparative "method of agreement".

Three or four types of interpretations and general strategies of concrete importance are distinguishable within the broad framework of the thesis under review.

The first approach may be referred to as peasants versus landlords. This is the classical position. Rent on land is the main form of exploitation. Control of land is the very basis of power. Land should be given to the actual producers. This will liberate the forces of production within agriculture, increase production and the peasants' standard of living and lay the foundation for development in the society as a whole. Such a land reform is actually bourgeois. But the bourgeois forces are

incapable of implementing it in their own capacities. It has, thus, to be enforced, not least by the peasants themselves.

I will compare three cases. Indian Communists in Kerala took this interpretation as a point of departure during the fifties, sixties and seventies and actually enforced the most radical land reform in the country. In the early sixties, the Indonesian Communists tried to do the same in Java but failed. After the destruction of the PKI in 1965-1966, the "New Order" regime instead implemented a so-called green revolution. Some years later, the Communists in West Bengal began to help tillers to possess land of their own, the movement became radicalised and failed, but later resumed with more modest, though unusually well implemented, agrarian programmes in the late seventies and early eighties.

The second approach will be called the *rural revolution*. The basic analysis is the same as within the first approach discussed in the above paragraph. However, the control of land by the use of extra-economic force is stressed. These extra-economic means have to be smashed before any socio-economic change is possible. Revolutionary political changes are, thus, a precondition for consistent land reforms.

I will concentrate on the late sixties and early seventies in the case of West Bengal, where the rural revolution approach was most consistently applied.

The final approach, which I will call *farmers and paupers versus the state*, addresses the effects of and the struggle against state-sponsored agrarian capitalism.

The cases that I will compare are, firstly, the contemporary Indian farmers' movement and the Communists' responses to it; secondly, attempts in India and Indonesia, among the rural poor and their activists, to stage new forms of struggle against (and sometimes for their own alternatives to) the state-led expansion of capitalism. I will also address some debates which these new developments have given rise to.

The Plan of Part I: In the first chapter, I will start by exploring the approach on peasants versus landlords, try to operationalise it. I will, thereafter, evaluate the main components of the theses by juxtaposing forecasts, recommendations, and calculated results with what actually happened.

The evaluation of this approach makes it possible to identify decisive tendencies in actual rural development which Communists had not been able to take into proper consideration with the use of their Marxist theories. In the second chapter I will take these unforeseen tendencies as a point of departure and look for alternative ways of explaining them.

In the third and fourth chapters, the tentative alternative theoretical perspective that I have arrived at will finally be used in order to explain the problems of applying the second and third theses, those about the rural revolution and peasants and paupers versus the state.

CHAPTER 1

PEASANTS VERSUS LANDLORDS

TURNING TO THE PEASANTS

Communists in Indonesia and India initiated radical peasants' struggles against the colonial powers as well as against the "neo-colonial state based on landlords and the big bourgeoisie". However, in the early fifties, more cautious lines of critical co-operation with progressive factions of the bourgeoisie were adopted. One of the basic arguments was that the so-called national bourgeoisie was interested in anti-feudal land reforms.

When this position was evaluated in an earlier report,[1] I concluded that despite "anti-feudal" ambitions and measures, dynamic bourgeois social and economic agrarian developments were lacking in Indonesia and frustrated in India.

In *Indonesia*, the front from above between Communists and nationalists set an unexpectedly narrow framework for "anti-feudal" struggles. Experience indicated that the peasants with a potential to become capitalist oriented farmers were based in administrative and political positions within the local organs of the state, in addition to their land, and thus could evade bourgeois developments by using these bastions for their extraction of surplus.

In *India*, what came out of quite drastic struggles against big landlords and for emerging farmers was, at least until the late sixties, petty landlordism. The Indian ex-tenants were indeed more rooted in their land than in Indonesia, but could enforce sufficient political and administrative protection to escape much of the progressive logic of capitalism—to compete, invest and produce cheaper and more.

However, in the southwest Indian state of Kerala from the late fifties until recently, in Java in the early sixties, and in West Bengal from the late sixties until today, the Communists have departed from their

previous reliance on ascribed national bourgeois anti-feudal interests and attempted to enforce land reforms in their own capacity.

Let me briefly review the settings and analyse the theses which the Communists took as their points of departure.

Kerala

Having left the socialist wing of the Congress Party during the colonial period, many Communists in southwest India succeeded in combining militant anti-feudalism with not only anti-colonialism but also, later on, with the national question—the formation of Kerala.

In 1957 a Communist-led United Front managed to win the first elections in the newly created state of Kerala. E.M.S. Namboodiripad's administration received a lot of attention; mainly because it was labelled the first democratically elected Communist government, but to some extent also because it was undemocratically overruled by Mrs Gandhi two years later. E.M.S. returned to power between 1967 and 1969, after which the Communist Party of India (CPI) preferred to co-operate with the Congress Party rather than with the new Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), established in 1964, achieving the position of Chief Minister between 1969-1977 in return. A broad Left Front led by both Communist parties made a brief comeback between 1980 and 1981, but thereafter it took six years before the Left Front, unexpectedly, managed to win again.[2]

Waking up on a train or in a bus approaching north or central Kerala from Karnataka or Tamil Nadu, one could easily believe one was travelling from west to east on the equally beautiful, densely populated and intensively cultivated Javanese countryside instead. However, well organised irrigation systems are usually lacking, and so are, to take but one other example, nucleated villages. Also, there are important differences within Kerala itself, between, on the one hand, the fertile, very densely populated coastal lowlands with widespread backwaters, the intensively cultivated valleys in the midlands, and the highlands with areas of forest. On the other hand, there are equally important differences between the historically comparatively "backward and feudal" Malabar region in the north, and the former princely and relatively developed states of Cochin and Travancore in the south, with more independent peasants but also more agricultural labourers,[3] higher levels of education, health, industrialisation, commerce etc. On the whole, industry is weak. Kerala, with about a quarter of one hundred million inhabitants, is still predominantly agricultural (including

fishing) but with an (in India) unusually high degree of cashcropping. At the same time, however, the tertiary sector has for a long time been very important, and, together with extensive education and public administration, is increasingly integrating people in rural and urban areas. Commerce rather than production is developing as the economy is becoming more and more speculative.

Historically Kerala was difficult to reach across the mountains in the east but, situated along the coast of the Arabian Sea, it was open to influences from outside. The caste system is very much in existence. But the stratified and hierarchical Hindu view of mankind is less predominant than elsewhere on the subcontinent. Religious communalism is affected not only by Hinduism but also by Islam and various Christian churches, as well as by Judaism (which first arrived there after the fall of Jerusalem). Serious communal clashes have been rare. International trading has a long and prominent history, particularly with the Arab world. (And at present, skilled Kerala workers are frequently found working in the Gulf countries, even if the good times seem to be over by now and many have had to return home.) Women have a strong position by Indian standards. The rate of illiteracy is the lowest in India and higher education comparatively widespread. Amartya Sen has even suggested similarities with the less élitist Buddhist tradition of Sri Lanka.[4]

It was in this setting that the Kerala Communists, not least their theoretical and political guru E.M.S., succeeded in working from within oppressed castes and religious communities, linking their particular struggles with others, and thus developing broad alliances partly based on class issues.[5] However, this strategy, and particularly the need to form electoral alliances (in order to win a simple majority in one-man constituencies), led to embarrassing long-standing co-operation with communal groups and parties, not least with the Muslim League in north Kerala, which was not abandoned until the 1987 state elections.

The general aim of the Communist-led government that came to power in 1957 was to start implementing unfulfilled Congress Party promises and to give people more freedom to struggle for a better life. Priority was given to the formulation and implementation of a bourgeois land reform.[6]

The Communists maintained that, generally speaking, feudal-like control of and rent on land had to be fought against first, since it was the root cause of most problems. The actual producers had to get

control over their means of production, mainly land, in order to improve production, and to be free and able to decide, economically and politically, about their own future.

Many party leaders were aware of the very complicated and diverse tenancy relations in Kerala, as well as the fact that there were many agricultural labourers and not enough land for everyone.[7] But again, remnants of feudalism had to be fought against first. This situation needed to be taken care of before even those who were not directly exploited by landlords could improve their positions. And an even more basic prerequisite for the implementation of land reforms and economic development was social transformation, mobilisation, organisation and political change, since the feudal-like exploitation was upheld through the use of extra-economic means. "Land reforms should not be looked upon in terms of how many acres that are there but as a social transformation."[8]

Initially, the Communist movement was strongest among tenants, especially in the north, while most poor and landless people in the rural areas had a hunger for land in common. "Of course, all of us knew, since the fifties, that there was not enough land. But one has to start on the level of peoples' own consciousness. And even today, hunger for land is still there."[9]

If the masses got access to land, regardless of whether the plots were large enough to make them viable or not, landlords would at least have lost their basis of power and progressive developments *could* then take place—with support and protection from a progressive government. Consequently, while drafting new agrarian laws and trying to get them passed legally, the new Communist government started by giving protection against the eviction of tenants, and preventing the repressive organs of the state from clamping down on the rural masses who were trying to mobilise and organise and were demanding radical change.

There is no need to go into details regarding the various laws. The main ideas, besides improved security for the tenants, were fixed tenures and the right for tenants, supported by the government, to buy the land that they tilled,[10] at least their hutsites, while the landlords had the right to keep some land for their own cultivation (with or without employed labour). There was also a ceiling on the ownership of land (fairly high, but the lowest in India at that time). There were exceptions for public, religious, or charitable institutions and for plantations. Surplus land would be distributed to poor and landless peasants. Agricultural labourers would receive minimum wages etc.

The land reform laws were successfully undermined by the landowners and by the opposition parties, including the Congress Party, as well as by organs of the Central government. Contradictions in the rural areas became very tense. In addition to this, the E.M.S. government tried to moderately de-communalise the education system. Finally, before the laws could be implemented, the opposition managed to create enough problems of "law and order" to make it possible for New Delhi to intervene and, under the leadership of Mrs Gandhi, to dismiss the Communist-led government.

Eventually less radical versions of the laws were passed. Meanwhile, the Communists continued their campaigns in the rural areas and mobilised more and more people. In addition, the open split within the Communist movement in the mid-sixties paved the way for radicalisation of and some over-bidding between the CPI and the (in Kerala) much larger and more powerful CPI-M. This characterised the second E.M.S. government between 1967 and 1969. The CPI-M had intensified its work amongst agricultural labourers[11] and was more eager than ever to give priority to social and political change. The left within the party was on the offensive and E.M.S. even thought about resigning. For example, Politburo member Ranadive stated that the task of the United Front Government was to "unleash discontent" rather than to "give relief".[12] People should not be given the illusion that, for instance, co-operatives were a solution before radical land reforms had been implemented.[13] And the CPI-M did not seem to be eager to carry through the decentralisation of political power to governments on the local level which were not in their hands. The United Front could not agree on how to amend the laws and, particularly, on how to implement them. Finally the CPI decided to separate from the more revolutionary Communists and to join forces with the Congress Party instead (within the framework of the general ideas of a national democratic government, which I evaluated in the previous report). CPI-leaders were afraid of losing out completely to the CPI-M.[14] Here was a chance to reap the harvest by starting to implement at least parts of the land reform — while leaving those who had worked hardest for it, the CPI-M, out in the cold.

The CPI-M and its mass organisations responded by giving priority to extra-parliamentary struggles, including militant popular enforcement of the laws in advance of formal legal procedures. Over the years most laws were actually implemented. The CPI-M returned to more cautious lines. And in the early eighties, when renewed co-operation with the CPI was possible and a Left Front government came to power

for a brief period, India's most radical land reform became a fact. Landlordism had been uprooted.

However, new problems emerged. For example, many of the new landholders had problems of viability (some even lost their land), and were not eager to give concessions to labourers. The Communists tried to compromise. The Communist movement, as well as Kerala's economy, stagnated. Under-employment, speculation, corruption etc. were other new problems that had to be addressed. But I will return to the Communists' attempts to do this in Chapter Four.

Java

The Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) was at different times one of the most important and innovative Communist parties in the world. When the social-democratic movement in the Dutch East Indies was reorganised as a Communist party in May 1920, it became the first in Asia. Two months later the Comintern decided to adopt the PKI's strategy for conditional co-operation with progressive sections of the bourgeoisie, and to recommend this as the strategy for waging the struggle in the colonies. However, impatient left-wingers soon took over the PKI. After a few unsuccessful attempts at rebellion in the mid-twenties, it lost the initiative. Only a few years after Indonesia gained independence (1949) did the PKI re-emerge to resume its former greatness. The PKI, in just over a decade, became the world's third largest Communist party, and also the largest party in Indonesia, with its main base in Central and East Java.

The PKI mainly emphasised the state and capitalists as the driving social forces. Problems in relation to these ideas were analysed in my previous book on India and Indonesia.[15] In the early sixties, however, the Communists took land reform laws, proclaimed from above by President Sukarno, as a point of departure for their own activities, and decided to rely on the peasants instead of the state and bourgeois forces, and to stage offensive struggles to enforce implementation of the reforms. East and Central Java were characterised by serious tensions over land from the end of 1963, until they spilled over into the holocaust of late 1965 and early 1966 when the PKI was politically, and to a large extent also physically, eliminated.

If India is almost a continent, Indonesia is at least huge. Its length is equivalent to that between Ireland and the Urals, and its breadth to that between Scotland and Spain. There are about 13,000 islands and the population is the fifth largest in the world. However,

most of them are crowded onto the island of Java, which is the world's most densely populated agricultural area and where the peasants' struggle took place. Despite recent attempts at industrialisation, about 70 per cent of the population is still engaged in agriculture. And many of the others are burcaucrats, petty traders and service personnel.

Indonesia is strategically located, rich in raw materials, and a beautiful tropical country. But the rain forests are being destroyed by reckless cutting, while in Java in particular, plastic goods create litter, poisonous exhaust fumes and the sweet smell of *kretek* cigarettes combine with a stench of poverty so penetrating that even the air in the otherwise "protected" rich quarters is spoilt.

Indonesia is the largest Islamic country in the world. But Islam is mixed up with many other faiths including animism. There are also Hindus, Buddhists and Christians. The national language is Indonesian, which is understood by a great many of the 350 ethnic groups, who have 250 languages of their own—including Javanese. The Javanese culture is highly sophisticated (Indonesia was populated 3000 years before Western history begins), although by now deeply undermined by commercialism. .

Rural Java (and Bali) are not composed of only well irrigated rice-growing villages. As in Kerala, there are many other cash-crops, plantations, and important differences between low-, mid-, and highlands. In addition, the Dutch enforced the cultivation of sugar, including the use of paddy-lands. Generally speaking, private access to land has a longer history in West than on Central and East Java, where the Dutch were especially successful in working through the local élites, as well as in strengthening and using the villages as almost completely farming units.

It was in this setting that the PKI succeeded in creating an impressive rural following during the fifties. In particular President Sukarno and his supporters offered protection in return for the PKI's political support on vital national issues. However, this basic alliance with the so-called anti-feudal political and social forces actually prevented the Party from going beyond an initial mobilisation for a somewhat better standard of living for the people, within the established structures of power, including clientelistic and religious subordination of the masses. Hence, in the early sixties the Communists tried to find ways out of this blind alley.

When President Sukarno suddenly took the initiative and passed a basic land reform law in 1959-60, the Communists expanded their previously

cautious campaign for lower rents (40 per cent of the net harvest to the landowner and 60 per cent to the sharecropper) to include demands for a redistribution of property.

During President Sukarno's renewed national offensive in the early sixties against Holland for control of West New Guinea, his Communist clients had to set aside their attempts at radical peasant policies in favour of campaigns for "1001 ways of raising production". But once Holland had lost, the PKI leaders renewed their efforts. A serious confrontation with the newly British-created Malaysia broke out in September 1963. At this time the PKI had thus placed the land question very high on its agenda. At the Central Committee meeting in December, Chairman Aidit spoke of an imminent revolutionary situation and declared that the party should support and lead peasant activities to implement land reform laws, even if these specific activities bypassed the established co-operation and consultation between Communists, nationalists, and Muslims. In the public debate, these activities were called *aksisepihak*, unilateral or one-sided actions.[16]

With an increasingly Maoist accent, Aidit hinted that even if the "bureaucratic capitalists" were strong in the towns, they were weak in the villages. The PKI was now said to be a well developed mass and cadre party with 2.5 million members, while it was claimed that its peasant organisation organised seven million adult peasants or 25 per cent of the active peasant population. Also, by passing the land reform laws, Sukarno had legitimised efforts to pursue the peasant struggle. Within the framework of the confrontation with Malaysia, he had suggested a strategy of self-reliance, which the PKI could claim presupposed land reforms that could motivate the peasants to produce more.

In this way, Aidit believed, the PKI could combine both nationalism and class struggle in the rural areas. Thanks to the mood of radical nationalism, the Party did not need to break totally with Sukarno's policy of co-operation and consultation between Communists, nationalists, and Muslims, despite the dictates of the rural class struggle. It would also be difficult for Sukarno's clients among the nationalists and Muslims to withdraw, even though they could call the Communists "one-sided".

Hence, there existed the organisational and political preconditions for the Communists to put into practice their theory of an Indonesian peasant struggle led by the PKI. The fundamental assumption was that the peasants had a more or less bourgeois interest in struggling against

feudal lords and their benefactors, the imperialists. Meanwhile, contradictions among the peasants themselves (including the landless ones) were of subordinate significance.

Further, since it had by now, according to the PKI, become obvious that the so-called bourgeois forces would not be able to solve the problems of the peasants, the Party could shoulder the task instead, and lead the peasants in the struggle to finalise the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolution. Even though the PKI refuted armed struggle, these conclusions were dressed mainly in Maoist terms. The peasants were regarded as being the most important revolutionary force. In the alliance between workers and peasants the party represented (replaced?) the workers.

Party leaders made strenuous efforts to produce and disseminate statistics and qualitative studies indicating that there was a considerable concentration of land in the hand of a small group of feudal landlords, (even if their land was not always in the form of consolidated estates), while the vast majority owned no land at all, or else so little that they could not reproduce their families. Prime importance should be given to these "poor and landless peasants". These, as well as the middle peasants, should rationally have some common interest against the landlords. Thereby the PKI should be able to mobilise some 90 per cent of the village population against isolated feudal landlords. Rich peasants would remain neutral, on condition that they were not provoked. All the so-called village devils, including not only those who owned a lot of land and rented it out, but also moneylenders, wicked authorities, village bandits et al. were, according to the Party's analysis, based on the land of feudal landlords.

Consequently, the Communists suggested an anti-feudal land reform with the basic slogan "(free) land to the tiller". All sharecropping would thus be forbidden. However, during the initial debate on the land reform, there were important protests from other groups, especially the Muslims. Sukarno stressed the fact that many underpaid civil servants had to rent out land in order to survive. Consequently, the PKI supported the compromise that there should be a ceiling on land, including land taken in pledge or leased in. (For instance, in the most densely populated and irrigated rice-growing areas the upper limit was five hectares per family and the ideal minimum two hectares.) However, absentee landlords were to give up their possessions, while religious institutions and plantations were exempted from the reform. Land which had been mortgaged for seven years or more should be returned to the original owner. Redistributed land was to be paid for within a period of

fifteen years and with a low rate of interest. Sharecropping was retained but the net harvest was to be equally divided between tiller and owner. Finally, among the most important achievements of the laws, state-owned land (for example, previously princely land) was also to be redistributed.

Even though the PKI accepted this as a first step, the Communists also encouraged the retention of 60 per cent of the net harvest, if the landlord refused to follow what the law prescribed (50:50). And, more importantly, they started an intensive propaganda campaign to demand that the land be given free of charge to the tiller. Massive demands and demonstrations for a more radical land reform could assist the PKI to outmanoeuvre the opposition, force a United Front cabinet to take over and, from that platform, to pursue considerably more revolutionary land reform policies, among other things.

However, as we know, the attempts at enforcing the land reforms gave rise to serious conflicts, which spilled over into and were further strengthened by the general and very violent anti-Communist campaign that erupted in late 1965. And then followed, instead, the "green revolution".

West Bengal

While many Kerala Communists departed from the socialist wing within the Congress movement, most of their Bengal comrades were rooted in semi-terrorist nationalist organisations outside the Congress. And while the Communists in Kerala were based mainly in the rural areas, among anti-feudal tillers and workers, communism in West Bengal was initially, despite peasants' protests and local revolts, a predominantly urban phenomenon, popular among Calcutta's working and lower middle classes, and usually with top leaders from the almost aristocratic intellectual élite that was bypassed by colonial commercialism.

It was only in the late sixties, that the West Bengal Communists in general, and the newly created CPI-M in particular, began to focus mainly on the rural scene. After many years of economic stagnation, a serious and badly handled famine in 1966 (during which many peasants protested against state procurement), and divisions within the Congress movement, a United Front government, not led by, but decisively influenced by the Communists, took over the Writers Building in Calcutta for a brief period of time in 1967. As Minister of Land and

Land Revenue, CPI-M's dynamic and popular peasant leader Harekrishna Konar started the drafting of land reforms, but was soon preoccupied by the peasant and inner-Party revolt in Naxalbari, to which I shall return in Chapter Three. Labour unrest, peasant protests, and divisions within the government were more than enough to enable New Delhi to intervene some months later through the governor and finally to impose presidential rule.

The Communists, however, got their revenge in the 1969 state elections. Another United Front Government was elected. The CPI-M, as well as the CPI, almost doubled their seats in the Assembly. This time Konar and the CPI-M initiated militant peasants' struggles, which, however, together with labour unrest and post-Naxalite urban terrorism, led to the fall of the government in early 1970 and another period of presidential rule.

In the mid-term polls of 1971, the CPI-M made further advances but became isolated. As in Kerala, the CPI was moving towards the Congress Party, which returned to power. The CPI-M was exposed to severe hardship, outright repression (including the so called red terrorists' actions) and was made to lose the 1972 general elections, which took place soon after Mrs Gandhi's popular victory in the war in Bangladesh. According to the pro-Congress CPI-scholar Profulla Roy Choudhury, the "unfair electoral means by the Congress was not necessary at all".[17]

It was only in 1977, after the Emergency was revoked, that the CPI-M and its new Left Front made a strong comeback. Presumably it was brought forward not so much by its own merits as by the general anti-Congress wave. A much more cautious and broader agrarian programme was carried along. The comparatively consistent implementation *and* institutionalisation of the new policy made it possible for the Communists to develop a genuine organisational and broad electoral basis in the rural areas. Therefore, more than ten years later, and despite losses among workers and others in urban areas, the Left Front is still in control of the state government and the CPI-M is more hegemonic than ever—even though we should not forget that its impressive number of seats in the Assembly does not reveal a similar high share of the electorate, because of the system of a simple majority in one-man constituencies.

At the same time, the West Bengal of today (more than the less directly colonised Java and Kerala) reminds me of the remnants of a huge estate where the Calcutta mansion and shipping port, as well as out-growing peasants, are left behind; an estate which the former

exploiters could desert in favour of more safe and profitable ventures elsewhere. However, some 50 million workers and servants still have to stay on and make ends meet by fighting, at first hand, according to more or less successful individual (or rather family) strategies, for survival within fragments of the former estate, but to some extent also according to different ideas of how a new coherent, though less repressive and exploitative, unit could grow up among the ruins, despite a constant lack of most prerequisites. Still, there are, in comparison with India as a whole, impressively few signs of communal violence between different castes, and ethnic and religious groups, as well as vested interests in land etc. among the public administrators; and more decentralised and fairly democratic decision making in at least rural areas; plus high cultural and intellectual standards, though more elitist and with a lower rate of literacy than in Kerala.

According to Harekrishna Konar(writing in 1968), the "revisionists" (i.e. the CPI) were wrong in maintaining that the problems of the peasants could be solved through reforms imposed by the state in co-operation with the so-called national bourgeoisie. On the contrary, the CPI-M in West Bengal must help workers and peasants to fight on their own and to enforce unfulfilled land reforms.[18]

The basic arguments for a land reform were the same as in Kerala and in Java: landlords controlled most land and, since the real producers were separated from it, prevented further development. Peasants were no longer a unified class and more and more became poor and landless.[19] If the green revolution spread, it might develop into a "red" one.[20]

Land should not be taken from poor people, or middle class civil servants who rented out their land, but from the oppressors and exploiters who really concentrated land.[21] Such land might not be enough for all the poor and landless, who should be given prime importance by the CPI-M. But even the rural labourers were pauperised peasants, who had a hunger for land in common with all the others. The main thing was to liberate as many as possible from old bonds, and increase their capacity to fight for a better life in general, and radical political changes in particular, since landlords maintained their positions through extra-economic political means. For example, previous land reforms had not been consistently implemented because, among other things, representatives of the landlords had been in control of local, state and union governments. And small peasants had not received any support from the state, which was why they were not viable. Thus, to begin with, there was a need for a progressive state government—but such an

administration would not be elected if the rural masses were not mobilised and acted militantly outside the parliamentary sphere.[22]

Instead of drafting new and better laws (as in Kerala), and then waiting until all proper authorities, including those in New Delhi, had confirmed them—and consequently until landlords et al. had evaded the laws—the Party and the peasant movement should, on their own and directly on the spot, enforce previous anti-feudal laws. The most obvious collaborators, the landed (or rather rent/revenue collecting) *zamindars* had already been stripped of their previous basis of power. But others remained. In particular, surplus land hidden by landlords (*benami*-land) was to be disclosed and expropriated. Such actions could be legally confirmed later on.[23]

The CPI-M's perspective changed over the years. The militant line of the late sixties backfired. Intensive debates took place within the party and its peasant movement, not only in West Bengal.[24] A less revolutionary all-peasant line was approved by the Central Committee of the CPI-M in 1976,[25] about a year before a Left Front government was elected into the Writers Building. Konar, who had passed away, was replaced as Minister of Land and Land Revenue by the less rhetorical and more cautious Benoy Chaudhuri.

"We no longer had to enforce a new government but could peacefully co-ordinate parliamentary, administrative, and extra-parliamentary actions", explained the party's land reform expert, Biplab Dasgupta many years later; and Ashok Mitra added that there was no longer a need to compete with the Naxalites.[26]

But more than that, the renewed all-peasant line implied that no actions were to be taken which could divide landless agricultural workers and poor peasants from middle peasants or provoke the rich.[27] Militants from the late sixties (for example in Sonarpur[28]) were not quite happy about this, and even leaders of the peasant movement like the general secretary Santimoy Ghosh,[29] and the former Land Commissioner D. Bandyopadhyay,[30] still ritually maintained that there was enough surplus land which could be given to the poor and landless, since landlords (including petty ones) still controlled some 35 per cent of it. However, more influential leaders (like Chaudhuri,[31] Biplab Dasgupta,[32] Mitra,[33] Ashim Das Gupta[34] and, on the central level, Harkishan Singh Surjeet[35]) seemed and seem to agree that further expropriation and redistribution of land was and is impossible, either because of a lack of land or for political reasons—not only in order to

uphold an all-peasant line but also to prevent "an enormous split within the Party".[36]

On the contrary, priority was given to, firstly, the effective implementation of previous laws regulating and bettering the position of the sharecroppers (through the so called *Operation Barga*), and, secondly, the decentralisation and democratisation of public administration of land reforms plus rural development programmes (through renewed and vitalised *panchayati raj* institutions).

Operation Barga, which was launched in 1978, attempted a quick and safe recording of the sharecroppers on the spot, in the villages, thereby giving them access to legal rights and protection plus support under various development programmes.[37] Ideally, when land reform officials visited a village they started by holding an evening group meeting with the potential beneficiaries in their localities and with support from the local peasant movement. Various problems were discussed. The rights and benefit of recording oneself as a sharecropper (including the fact that it was now up to the landlords to prove that the sharecroppers were wrong—not the other way around) were spelt out. Tentative lists of tenancy relations were drawn up. The next day these were publicly verified in the field in the presence of the landowners and the sharecroppers. These "improved" lists were then hung up in all important places, giving landowners another chance to file objections, which were then heard publicly. Finally, the certificates were distributed to the sharecroppers, and the team proceeded to another village.[38]

The *panchayats* (local government bodies) had previously been apolitical, mostly arbitrary organisations, ruled by the landlords et al. (who could deliver votes to the Congress Party), but not entrusted with much power on behalf of the state government in Calcutta.[39] This situation was altered in 1978.[40] In order to strengthen the rural poor and prevent individual actions harmful to the collective, political parties were allowed to compete in the massive, impressive and free local elections. As usual, political power was seen as a prerequisite for not only the distribution of land but also further investments in, for example, irrigation, distribution of inputs and credits, and preliminary thoughts about fairer co-operatives, which, however, must not challenge the somewhat better-off peasants. The new local governments were thus entrusted with most of the implementation of various land reforms, and locally as well as centrally financed development programmes. This included the identification of surplus land, the assigning of permanent titles for homestead purposes, the selection of beneficiaries, the administration of rural works etc.[41]

"To create viable peasants of all the beneficiaries was never the goal. That cannot be done before capitalism has disappeared and (or) there are enough industries, where a lot of those who now work within agriculture can get new jobs. We do not want to make only some few viable. As many as possible must get at least some land—in order to increase production, to get the best possible political effects, and because it is psychologically important for the peasants."[42]

Furthermore, in order to uphold a broad peasant front, the Communists maintained that there was no immediate intention to fight hard for higher wages for those who worked for poor and middle peasants, before the latter had the chance to better their positions and were able to pay.[43] And since many of the strengthened sharecroppers were tilling poor and middle peasants' land, it was important to "compensate" the latter by providing them with state support in the form of better irrigation, tax relief,[44] cheap inputs, etc. and to argue that they would receive higher rents from better-off and more motivated tenants.[45] (The Communists had already supported demands for a more friendly state attitude towards the somewhat better-off peasants in the mid-sixties, during the famine and before the first United Front government was installed.[46])

Finally the CPI-M and its peasant movement accused New Delhi of, among other things, delaying and preventing the Left Front government from implementing its amended version of previous land reforms.[47] This new law does away with a lot of previous ways of evading the ceilings (including, for example, loopholes in relation to fisheries, and religious and charitable institutions), and would make it possible to expropriate and redistribute at least another half million acres of land . However, now that New Delhi has approved it, it seems as if many influential Communist leaders themselves are reluctant to put it into effect because of, as far as I understand, likely political repercussions outside as well as inside their own ranks.[48]

THE THESES

It should be obvious from the brief reviews of what the Communists saw as their points of departure in Kerala, in Java and in West Bengal, that the basic theses applied in different settings were quite similar. Therefore, I proceed by bringing the three cases together, systematise them and discuss in what way they may be evaluated.

The common point of departure in all three areas was the argument, that ownership of land was concentrated by landlords, and that the rent on land was the main form of exploitation of their tenants. This control of land was the main basis of power and prevented further development of production.

Therefore, the Communists suggested, there should be a redistribution of land to the tenants. This would liberate the further development of the forces of production, increase output and lay the foundation for sustained and comparatively equal development of the society as a whole.

In Kerala, in Java, and in West Bengal there were few big estates. The plots of land were comparatively small. But since the tenants would not have to pay rent any more, or at least more "fair" rents, they should become viable, and be capable of, as well as interested in making new productive investments.

The prescribed general development strategy was thus similar to the so-called American, or at least French, paths of transition to agrarian capitalism, rather than the English or German.[49] The American path stood for capitalism from below, where landlords hardly exist; also, they could be weakened, as in France; while landlords were decisive in England (in co-operation with capitalist tenants and proletarianised former peasants as workers) and in Germany (as managing estate-holders using bonded labour).

However, land was basically monopolised through the use of extra-economic political, ideological, administrative and repressive means. Political changes were therefore a precondition for the distribution of land and socio-economic development. But to gain political power one must start by mobilising and organising the actual producers, through the taking up of their immediate interests such as better tenancy relations, lower rents etc. And, when Communist groups possessed some power, the implementation of land reforms required state and party support too, as well as protection of the beneficiaries.

Also, most Communists did not want to contribute to temporary reforms which, according to them, could give people the illusion that their problems could be solved without radical political changes. For example, most Indian Communists did not pay much attention to ideas of building co-operatives—especially not before they themselves were in firm control.

And if the argument was raised that tenants on very tiny plots could hardly become viable even if they did not have to pay rent any

more, most Communists replied that the main goal was not to create productive petty bourgeois peasants, but, firstly, to get rid of the landlords' monopoly of land, and, secondly, to change the relations of power. All problems of viability, productivity etc. could be solved once the Communists had decisive political powers.

A presupposed common hunger for land was, thus, the very basis for the Communist strategies in Kerala, in Java and in West Bengal. What about other forms of exploitation and other interests?

To begin with, Communists in West Bengal and Java paid special attention to what I call petty landlordism and the difficulty of upholding a united peasant front with a consistent policy of giving land to the tenants; or, even worse, to the tillers. In these cases, the general prescription was thus to limit the demands of the sharecroppers to better and more secure conditions, while, in West Bengal, promising future state funds to the propertied peasants cum petty landlords in return.

What about agricultural labourers? These were usually analysed in terms of dispossessed, landless peasants who should get a piece of surplus land— land that had previously been expropriated from them. If this was not possible, as in many areas in Kerala, their conditions should at least improve when the new farmers did not have to pay rent any more and could increase production.

How to Evaluate the Theses?

The vital elements of these theses shall be evaluated by juxtaposing them with what actually happened. Since this is a huge task, there is a need for analytical tools in the form of researchable, revealing questions.

Communists' Arguments	*Questions for Evaluation*
1. Monopoly of land is the main basis of power; and rent on land is the main form of exploitation.	If the land is distributed, do those with vested interests in land also lose power and does most exploitation disappear?

2. Landlords' monopoly of land and political power have to be fought before viable producers can be created and develop production Distribution of land to, or at least more security and lower rents for, the tenants will give rise to development.	Can unviable tenants fight landlords et al. successfully? And if land, or more security and lower rents, are given to tenants, do investments, productivity, output, etc. increase?
3. To gain political power— start with people's immediate interests. But, since the exploitation and control of land is maintained with the use of extra-economic means, implementation of land reforms and further development require state and party support to as well as protection of the beneficiaries.	Does mobilistaion etc. around immediate interests lead to more political power? And do support and protection, liberate producers' political and economic creativity?
4. The majority of the rural masses can and should be united on the basis of a common hunger for land.	Do the rural masses unite and fight for land, or are other interests and conflicts decesive?
5. Agricultural labourers are usually dispossessed landless peasants. Land expropriated by landlords and declared as surplus land should thus be distributed to those who were proletarianised—the landless	Is there enough "surplus land" due to previous proletarianisation? And do the so-called landless peasants receive surplus land?

6. When there is not enough surplus land to solve the problems of all rural labourers, their conditions will nevertheless improve as employers do not have to pay rent but can instead invest in further development of production.	Do labourers get "their share" of the "rent fund", and do they benefit from the development of production?

I will now proceed by trying to answer the questions in the right-hand column in six sub-sections. I hope that this systematisation is worth its price—an unfortunate but inevitable repetition of facts and arguments in the different sub-sections.

THE THESES EVALUATED

Other Roots of Power and Exploitation

If, according to the Communists, the monopoly of private land is the main basis of power, and rent on the land is the decisive form of exploitation—are, then, those with a vested interest in land losing power, and does most exploitation disappear if land is distributed?

In *Kerala*, the old landlords lost most of the land that they had previously rented out and their hegemonic positions were uprooted.[50] The resistance of the landlords against radical land reforms was quite powerful.[51] But this was mainly because they were able to mobilise many landless and poor people by the use of communal loyalties (for instance during the "liberation struggle" against the Communists in 1959). And communalism has not automatically disappeared with landlordism. It is still there, making it difficult for the Communists to reach out, rely on issues of class, and, for example, decentralise the government of Kerala without giving in to local patrons.[52] Also, external bases of power, particularly union government intervention, has been used to cause economic and political problems for radical Kerala governments and even to topple at least one of them.[53]

There were thus other important bases of power besides and not necessarily based on the monopoly of land. Furthermore, land reform

was no longer a matter of life and death after some years. Sections of the initially very hostile political movements (including the Congress-I party) were, together with the CPI, even responsible for implementing many of the reforms. How could they? Firstly, this was, presumably, the price for being able to isolate the CPI-M and its huge masses of militant poor peasants and workers. But secondly and more importantly, with control over the local (as well as central) state apparatuses in hand it was obviously not so dangerous to lose land. Exemptions could be made, loopholes could be found, the police could be used. Finally, there was the enlightened bourgeois rationale for supporting limited land reforms: new votebanks of propertied peasants should emerge; ex-tenants would be afraid of losing their land, be eager not to pay high wages, and be dependent upon credits, inputs, prices, alternative investment opportunities and so on.

This proved true.[54] Landlordism has passed away, but similar conservative practices and vested interests have emerged despite the fact that there is no longer any monopoly of land. Rather, many anti-feudal tenants who fought with the Communists received comparatively substantial holdings thanks to the reforms, and then turned to conservative and bourgeois groupings instead.[55] And one of the reasons given for continued support to the Communists is that they might be powerful enough to "pay back" with, for example, protection against militant labourers.[56]

Similarly, much but hardly most exploitation has disappeared with landlordism.[57] Even small peasants, who must supplement their incomes from agriculture with other jobs, often have to employ labourers. And on top of the increasingly important exploitation of wage labour, other forms of appropriation of surplus have also become instrumental. Because of the strengthened position of labourers (to which I shall return in the sub-sections ahead) and prohibitions against landlordism, propertied peasants try to minimise their dependence upon workers, and are looking for alternative investment opportunities.[58] Consequently, investments have mainly taken place not within production but where regulations can either be evaded or manipulated and where the workers are not well organised—within commerce (including outright speculation in real estate, banking etc.[59]) and through control of public goods (including various inputs for agriculture) and administration[60]—while those who cannot find jobs within agriculture have been looking for alternatives within trade, service, public administration, etc. or have simply migrated, mostly to the Gulf countries.

Thus, the breaking up of landlordism in Kerala did not result in the undermining of powerful landed interests and options of exploitation. Other bases of power could be relied upon and used for the creation of new bastions. Exploitation of wage labour and the appropriation of surplus within commerce and through various organs of the state have now become decisive.

Turning to *Java*, and discussing whether the monopoly of land is the main basis of power, I would like to start with the late fifties by drawing attention to the fact that it was the PKIs' successes in the *local* elections that caused harsh reactions from the rural well-off, rather than Communist agitation for anti-feudal land reforms.[61] Obviously, local and regional administrative and political positions were extremely important bases of power. Where the PKI and its peasant front had become influential it was quite common that not only the poor but also many of the well-off peasants were eager to uphold good contacts. However, during the so-called Guided Democracy, the Communists were forced to retreat in order not to lose Sukarno's protection. Most local leaders of the state were again appointed rather than elected, and supervised by the army in particular. Further elections were postponed.

When we turn to the intensive struggles for the implementation of the limited land reform in the early sixties[62] (unlike in Kerala, not prohibiting feudal rent on land), it is important to note that, firstly, not only were plantations, and religious and charitable institutions exempted, but also, and even more importantly, that substantial amounts of public fertile land were allocated (as so called *tanah bengkok*) to the village officials. Secondly, the frequent use of influence within the public administration as well as religious communities to obstruct the preparation and implementation of the reforms, also suggests other bases of power besides private land. Finally, since the reforms were never consistently carried out, it is quite possible to use more recent data on the ownership of land to question the assertion that land actually was privately monopolised. Figures from the heyday of the green revolution on rural Java suggest otherwise; but to this I will return in the sub-sections below.

If land reform was no revolutionary threat, what, then, were the bitter struggles in the early sixties in rural Java all about? If we, for the moment, postpone the discussion about divisions and struggles within the peasantry and among the landless,[63] it seems likely that the vital issues concerned privileged access to public resources plus control of rural labour(including tenants, of course). Or in other words, the

irritating capacity of more and more of the rural poor to organise according to their interests and to advance politically. The relative simplicity by which rural masters have divided, subordinated and disciplined labour after having neutralised all independent popular organisations is a good illustration. For example, open harvests are rare and various exclusionary labour arrangements (so that one does not have to share the surplus with too many others, and also get some comparatively privileged and loyal workers) are very common. Not even recent studies, indicating how exploitation and appropriation of surplus are carried out in Javanese areas affected by the green revolution, give sole importance to the rent on land or production of capitalist surplus value. Rather, more and more scholars highlight influence over the state administration (mainly concerning prices), privileged access to formally public resources (such as village land,[64] credits, inputs, irrigation etc.), and the tight control of rural labour and labour markets as predominant and optimal paths to, shall we say, a "richer life" within agriculture but also to expanding sectors such as transport and commerce.[65]

In 1969, when the Communists in *West Bengal*, and particularly in Sonarpur (24 Parganas), south east of Calcutta, militantly tried to enforce previously agreed land reforms, and to identify and distribute surplus land, the landlords lost power. Soon enough however, some of the beneficiaries did not get loans to keep production going. And many landlords, as well as their "loyal" workers and viable propertied peasants and tenants could get their revenge when the Left Front, some months later, lost political and administrative powers in Calcutta and was unable to protect the local activists.[66]

In 1977, however, the CPI-M was not only more cautious, but also followed a radically comprehensive line. Having returned to governmental powers in Calcutta, the Communists directly continued with their reforms at the local level. Landlords were no longer attacked individually. Some of their previously individual apolitical powers over decisive resources such as water,[67] credits, etc., related to local administration, were instead politicised and democratised. And when the Communists managed to win most of the local elections, they began to decentralise resources and powers from Calcutta to the new democratically ruled *panchayats*, the local organs of the state.[68]

The effects in terms of power were more complex than before. On the one hand, old bigger landlords had to retire and the rural basis of the Congress Party was uprooted. On the other hand, not only poor and landless villagers, but also peasants who were no longer threatened by

land reform measures, as well as protected viable tenants, penetrated and dominated many *panchayats* and their resources.[69] Unlike Kerala, most of the somewhat better-off were not able to turn away from the Communists and their Left Front partners. Political support and protection from the Communists, or at least other members of the Left Front, was necessary in order to gain and uphold security as favoured propertied peasants or tenants both outside and within the new, local and comparatively democratic organs of the state.[70]

Similarly, much but hardly all of the exploitation in rural West Bengal disappeared with the land reforms. Firstly, landlordism was and still is not prohibited. The reforms aimed at doing away with big landlords and their monopolies, and towards the bettering of tenants' positions. Secondly, between 1961 and 1971, the size of wage labour increased drastically.[71] However, this did not mean that an agrarian capitalism with free wage workers developed. In response to the threatening and sometimes popular enforcement of land reforms, land was often sold, donated or converted into fisheries. Also, those who could no longer concentrate land often turned to speculation, including trade and money-lending, demanding harvests rather than land as security. Consequently, most peasants and tenants could not expand, and sometimes could not even uphold their production. While exploitation did not increase, poverty often did.[72]

From 1977 onwards, as a result of the *Operation Barga* and the democratisation of the *panchayats*, the forms of exploitation partly changed. Peasants with holdings below the ceiling, as well as some of the better-off among the now strengthened tenants (who quite often also own land of their own), did and do not only employ labour but also lease and sub-lease out (*and* in) land.[73] Additionally, most workers are (not-) "free". They would suffer even more if they gave up the little protection and the few assets that they have on the local restricted labour market. But on the other hand they are not forced to stay with extra-economic means only. If these bonds were abolished, they would still not have enough of the means of production to survive.[74] One could argue that some comparatively well-off peasants actually developed capitalist-oriented farming according to the British path, where they leased in land cheaply in low seasons—when the owners cannot grow anything because of a lack of resources such as water—and then were able to add irrigation and various other inputs, because of their good contacts and credibility, and then employed the actual petty owners as labourers or tenants.[75] But petty landlordism usually flourishes in the process of re-peasantisation. Further, the rural well-off

have been engaged in many other activities at the same time—production, trade and speculation. Therefore, investments can be made, and profits can be taken out, where it is most favourable.[76] These practices seem to continue. Generally speaking, more investments are being made and more surplus is being appropriated outside of agricultural production than before—especially within circulation, and through control of local organs of the state.[77] Markets, including the local labour markets, are often restricted and manipulated.[78] Even if there is now a much more equitable distribution of public resources than before, there is also a lot more to distribute. Local power does matter and nobody is prepared to give it up. Preferential access to credits, irrigation, various inputs, etc. as well as a cheap and disciplined labour force usually require good contacts within the *panchayats*; often via Left Front parties and their mass organisations. In the same way it seems as if one can also influence the use of development funds, the identification and distribution of so-called surplus land, and, of course, very successfully, demand extremely low direct taxes.[79]

Let me *sum up and conclude*: Land reforms in Kerala, in Java, and in West Bengal definitely altered the structure of power. Big landlords were done away with. But most people with vested interests in land often could and still can rely on alternative bases of power such as influence within religious communities, the ability to manipulate markets and the supply of credits, and on political and administrative positions. The latter made it possible, for example, to repress militant opposition, evade many laws, and to use state regulations and resources to uphold old and create new bastions of power.

Neither was exploitation radically undermined, but rather transformed, when landlordism was prohibited or at least regulated. Wage labour increased. Petty landlordism developed in West Bengal. And most interestingly: the appropriation of surplus outside production on the market and within local organs of the state—through regulative powers but also control over essential public resources—developed.

The Communist theses about the monopoly of private land as the main basis of power, and rent on land as the decisive form of exploitation in Kerala, in Java and in West Bengal were obviously insufficient. There is a need to develop alternative theoretical elements to explain other bases of power and forms of exploitation. Such a venture requires, however, much more knowledge about the effects of land reforms. Let us continue with the second question for evaluation.

Unproductive Re-peasantisation

If, according to the Communists, the landlords' monopoly of land and political power have to be fought before most peasants and petty tenants can and will be viable and develop production— were (and are), then, unviable tenants capable of fighting successfully against the landlords, and do the actual producers really become viable, and invest, increase productivity, output etc. thanks to land reform?

Clearly many peasants, including small tenants who also had to sell their labour, were quite capable of fighting the landlords in *Kerala*.[80] However, this was a struggle for political and social change, not for development, with strong supportive organisations. Once old landlordism was uprooted, the new peasantry faced problems of increasing production and viability. Previous patronage was no longer available. Agriculture became even more commercialised. The producers had to buy almost everything they needed. And profitable production now presupposed many inputs, better irrigation etc. as well as higher wages.[81]

Former petty tenants and those who had received small plots from the little surplus land that was distributed were, of course, most severely affected. They possessed some security, and it was easier for them to borrow money, even if they often had to pay more to get it than the better-off.[82] But the fact that they did not have to pay rent anymore was not sufficient. Even the relatively well-off ex-tenants, who now own fairly big pieces of land, find it hard to invest in irrigation and weeding, to pay for necessary inputs and to handle labour. There are more conflicts with the workers. For many years the increase in wages (seen in relation to productivity) was the highest in India. Security of employment is much better than before. Many farmers complain that they have lost control over the labour process. It is, naturally, difficult to apply factory-methods to discipline agricultural labour and increase productivity. There are attempts at using Japanese methods of subordination and at returning to old forms of patron-client relations in order to get loyal workers. But many try to diversify their production, and turn away from rice to mainly commercial activities outside agriculture, or to crops which do not require so many labourers, and/or to production which can be mechanised.[83] Sometimes land is even left fallow. This has caused problems of production and an extremely unsound expansion of speculative business. Also, generally speaking, labourers have not gained much. To prevent harsh conflicts

between petty farmers and labourers, the Communists seem even to accept below minimum wages.[84]

Finally, the peasants demand state support in terms of more favourable credits, lower input prices (including the price of labour) and better price for the output. But the Kerala state was and is short of revenues. To begin with, peasants were hardly even taxed.[85] And, until recently, the CPI-M[86] rarely emphasised actions and programmes to promote agricultural development, but gave full priority to social and political change.[87] Central government support could hardly be expected. Industry in Kerala stagnated and did not offer alternative employment opportunities or new markets.[88] Many people migrated to then expansive Gulf countries.

So, what happend to production? Initially agricultural production was not paralysed because of the land reforms. On the contrary, figures suggest that it increased through to the late sixties and probably until the mid-seventies. Thereafter, however, the results are very poor,[89] although not everything can be blamed on the reforms.[90]

Consequently, unviable tenants may be very successful at getting rid of their landlords, but the former rents are far from enough to get progressive development started among the huge new peasantry. Thus, many peasants instead look for new forms of "protection". The Communists could split the pie more equally but have, so far, not much to offer when it comes to capital, other means of production and development in general. This has alienated the marginal peasants, especially, of course, when Communists were out of government and could not even give relief from the top down.[91] To argue, as the CPI-M peasant leader Rama Krishna has done, that the problem of production and viability has nothing to do with the land reform and the new small plots, but is caused by the lack of state subsidies and unfavourable prices,[92] is almost like saying that the growth of population in Java, for example, is no problem, because with another political and economic system all people could be put to work! What shall the peasant do under the existing circumstances? Turn to his communal organisation? Go to the Congress Party which has at least access to some resources? Join the pressure groups and organisations that demand subsidies from the state? In 1985, the present Chief Minister, CPI-M's E.K. Nayanar, argued that, "It is a process.... Those marginal peasants who lose land now due to, for example, indebtedness, will rally behind the workers."[93] The leading Politburo member Basavapunnaiah agreed and added that the middle peasants had no other option than to go to the Communists.[94] General Secretary E.M.S., on the other hand,

maintained that even if people would not get more relief from other parties, this did not necessarily imply that they would in fact go to the Communists. They might prefer communalism, for example. It is therefore necessary for the Party to develop a concrete alternative under present conditions, said E.M.S.[95] I shall return to this and to more recent Communist responses in Chapter Four when addressing the question of farmers' agitation against the state.

It is difficult to answer the questions in relation to *Java*. The late rice harvest of 1963 was very poor because of the worst drought and the worst invasion of rats in living memory. In February 1964 it was reported that more than a million people in Java were starving and many had died.[96] But even if one can almost take it for granted that some of these problems were caused by conflicts related to the attempts to implement land reforms, one can hardly say anything about the presumed positive effects on production. The reforms were never consistently implemented.

On the other hand, agricultural investments, productivity, output etc. increased rapidly and fairly stably after the destruction of the left movements, the overthrow of Sukarno and the authoritarian introduction of the green revolution. Was this despite the fact that the land reform had been blocked and because an alternative path, for example a Prussian top-down approach, had been enforced by Suharto? Or was there no need to change the relations of production? Had big landlordism been overstated? Were perhaps higher prices and the subsidised rapid development of the forces of production (i.e. green revolution packages) enough? Let me return to these exciting questions when we, later on, know more about the other effects of land reform policies, and can consider alternative explanations.

Finally, the Javanese tenants were obviously not very successful in their struggles against the rural lords. One of the main findings in my previous studies[97] is precisely that poor peasants and tenants were so unviable, and so extremely dependent upon patrons with access to private and also public means of production and other resources, that they were bound to their exploiters. Also, these patron-client relationships were often integrated with communal, especially religious, loyalties and solidarity. The fact that there was far from enough surplus land to distribute was another reason to look for protection and/or favourable treatment by one's patron. I will return to this in the fourth sub-section below.

One could therefore argue, that despite the political and organisational strength of the Indonesian Communists, the combination of unviability and dependency did not allow even successful anti-landlordism à la Kerala, not to mention the even more difficult post-land reform development of viable actual producers.

What happened to agricultural production in *West Bengal*? Some reports actually suggest that it came to a standstill on some disputed land during the 1969 militant struggles. Poor beneficiaries in Sonarpor simply did not have the inputs. And many owners deserted the area.[98]

After the emphasis upon more comprehensive agrarian reforms, including *Operation Barga* but also development support through the *panchayats*, production has at least not decreased due to the reforms.[99] And recent figures indicate that high yielding varieties are more frequently used now than before (when the still very poor drainage does not prevent it), and that productivity per unit of land has increased.[100] On the other hand, taking good and bad monsoons into consideration, and being careful with what year's figures one uses as a point of departure, I fail to see that there has been any significant improvements either[101]—despite somewhat more interest in special support for the development of production to peasants and tenants than in Kerala. Turning to investments, there are even discussions as to what extent the extremely poor irrigation (including the severe problems of drainage) has been improved.[102]

Why is it that those states with much less radical political and social changes than West Bengal had (like Uttar Pardesh, Haryana, Punjab, Gujarat, and Rajasthan) represent most of India's increased food production?[103] They may have received more support from New Delhi. Wheat may be easier to grow and develop within green revolution packages than rice. But let us then turn to Bengal as a whole and carefully read James K. Boyce's pertinent conclusion in his impressive book "Agrarian Impasse in Bengal": there is "little difference between West Bengal and Bangladesh in terms of agricultural performance, despite the fact that one is ruled by an elected Communist government and the other by a rightist military dictatorship".[104]

What has happened to those who were thought to be the propelling powers of agricultural development—the peasants and the strengthened tenants?

Perhaps the most urgent problem after the implementation of various land reform measures in West Bengal was and still is the difficulties for most peasants, including the strengthened tenants, to

invest and to promote rapid development of production. Many of them are not viable.[105] Moreover, many of the beneficiaries still have no or little access to various state subsidies and credits. And irrigation is still very poor.

To begin with, incentives in the form of increased effective demand for agricultural products are lacking.[106] Overall economic development in and near West Bengal is stagnating or slow. (On the other hand, the CPI-M happily remarks that since West Bengal is not a food surplus producing state, the peasants do not experience any price problems.[107])

Secondly, landlordism is not prohibited. Tenants still do not have access to most of the rent fund which could be used for investments. According to a recent survey in Cooch Behar and Midnapore districts, those who rent out land still gain the most from not paying for any inputs at all and "only" get 50 per cent of the surplus. It is often claimed that many, perhaps most, sharecroppers still do not even get the part of the harvest that they have a legal right to.[108]

Thirdly, the implementation of *Operation Barga* almost came to a standstill in the early eighties.[109] Among the causes for this was that the ideal form of civil service operations in village after village to register sharecroppers was not always implemented. And things did not turn better when peasant and *panchayat* leaders with more vested interests took over responsibility.[110] Some sharecroppers were so dependent upon their landlords that they could not afford to oppose them. Neither the peasant movements, nor the state could provide sufficient alternatives in terms of various forms of patronage.[111] (I will return to this in the next sub-section.) Moreover, not all of those who rented out land were particularly well-off. Nripen Bandyopadhyay maintains that 80 per cent of the households leasing out land own no more than five acres each.[112] Rather many of them, not only the very poor beneficiaries, were vital Communist supporters. The poor would probably rally behind the Left Front anyway. But what about the petty peasants cum landlords? The CPI-M defended and supported the latter.[113]

On the other hand (fourthly), about one-third of the tenants also own between one and five acres and rent in more than half of the total sharecropped area. These peasants cum tenants had, presumably, nothing against *Operation Barga*. On the contrary, they are the ones who benefited the most. In terms of actual control of land, they come close to the households operating 2.5-7.5 acres, which are about one-fifth of all rural households with almost half of the total operated area.

And they are reliable creditors.[114] The poor beneficiaries, however, hardly became viable.[115]

Fifthly, on top of these inequalities, the more or less "liberated" tenants, but also the peasants in general, need additional support not only to replace old patronage but also, for example, to pay for all the inputs etc. that must now be bought on the market—especially when they try to increase productivity.[116] However, there is a lack of state funds for such purposes. And in the struggle for what is available, the Communists are eager not to "provoke" the comparatively better-off.[117] The middle peasants are given irrigation, exemption from land tax, and cheap inputs etc. in return for accepting *Operation Barga*.[118] It is somewhat difficult to understand how the Communists (for whom it can hardly be surprising that New Delhi is not prepared to help) will be able to increase the support when they do not even tax most of the rich peasants. Finally, even if there were more subsidies, basic irrigation is so poorly developed that there would still be problems of viability.[119]

To wind up, most actual producers do not seem to be able to radically increase production thanks to basic land reforms. This is not only due to the lack of industrialisation, and of increased effective demand for their products and so on. The tillers also rarely get full access to the rent fund, and many are unviable. Communists have not given priority to the promotion of production. Subsidies are lacking and are unequally distributed. Even the comparatively better-off peasants sometimes find it hard (or irrational) to pay for all the new inputs etc., and might turn to other business.

Unviability and extreme dependency upon patrons made it difficult for Javanese tillers to struggle for even a basic land reform. New problems of viability in Kerala and West Bengal—due to small plots, the lack of subsidies, basic irrigation etc., and the need for more and expensive inputs — simultaneously make it very difficult for the actual producers to fight contemporary oppression and exploitation.

Hence, while the Communists in Kerala and West Bengal have been able to split the pie more equally and to resist a massive onslaught of capitalism, their re-peasantisation has hardly made it possible for the actual producers to substantially develop agriculture and to fight old and new exploitation.

The frequent lack of viability makes most peasants very dependent upon Communist patronage. This therefore require some elaboration.

Communist Patronage

If, according to the Communists, one has to start with peoples' immediate interests in order to gain power, but at the same time land reforms and further development require state and party support because exploitation and the control of land is maintained with extra-economic means—does, then, mobilisation around immediate interests lead to more political power, and do support and protection liberate producers' political and economic creativity?

Communists in Java, in Kerala as well as in West Bengal usually began by supporting peoples' immediate interests in order to gain political power. In the fifties, the PKI initially reached out to villagers through the organisation of literacy campaigns, sport and cultural associations etc. to pave the way for more advanced demands such as lower rents and land reform.[120] In Kerala, demands for less social inequalities between caste, for example, developed into anti-feudal struggles over land and demands for reasonable wages.[121]

I have already hinted at certain problems of working through peoples' immediate interests—not least that they are very diverse—and will also return to this in the following sub-sections, especially in the discussion on various interests related to land. To mention only a few previous examples, we have noted the contradictions between ex-tenants in Kerala who became owners of land and their labourers, as well as the tendency among the former to be against the Communists. Also, the need for alternative patronage—including almost everything from protection against repression to the allocation of credits—to weak villagers became obvious to the Communists. Hence, we saw how the PKI was eager not to lose Sukarno's support and noted that many poor peasants gave priority to the best possible patronage, particularly during the rural conflicts in the early sixties. Indian Communists did not only try to find alternatives to communal loyalties and solidarity, but also stressed the vested interests of rich peasants in various co-operative societies, for example, and the need to abstain from working through most of them.

Generally speaking, Communists therefore emphasised political consciousness—as opposed to everything that resembled trade unionism—and radical political change as a necessary prerequisite for a serious improvement in the peoples' standard of living, arguing that exploitation and control was maintained with the use of extra-economic means.

When the *Kerala* Communists first came to power in 1957 they gave, for example, priority to the politicisation of state apparatuses,[122] and to control over the police.[123] They usually abstained from working through co-operatives.[124] They decided that it was the responsibility of the state rather than the individual tenant to see to it that he could benefit from various land reform laws (otherwise he could be "persuaded" away from these benefits by his superiors),[125] and finally, they often found it hard to decentralise powers to legal organs of the state which were, generally speaking, more affected by communal than political loyalties.[126]

There were good reasons for these and similar policies. But at the same time, they often contradicted the liberation of the producers' political and economic creativity. For example, the priority given to party struggles for power implied in Kerala, until recently, devastating alliances with communal parties in order to win elections, and seriously downgraded efforts to promote economic development. The emphasis on government and bureaucratic intervention replaced the producers subordination to local patrons by another dependency on a, at best, friendly, and not too corrupt, "super patron". Negative attitudes to immediate work for economic development and co-operatives opened up avenues instead for co-operative efforts by other more or less progressive groups and Non-Governmental Organisations.[127] But more often individual and family solutions became necessary, and communal loyalties received a new lease of life. Also, progressive governments had increasing problems to split a non-growing pie as well as to give some relief to more and more people—including underemployed youth, many women, and most people in the so called informal sector—who did not benefit from land reform measures and increasing wages. The first government dominated by the Left was overthrown in 1959. A second Left cabinet was formed in 1967 and stayed for two years. The CPI then cooperated with the Congress-I instead of with the CPI-M and could in return lead state governments between 1969 and 1977. A broad Left Front made a brief comeback in 1980 but was thereafter in opposition for about six years.

It should, however, be stressed that the new Left Front government which was elected in 1987 seems to be attempting a radical change of much of this situation — to go for the promotion of development, and the empowering and democratising of local governments as well as co-operative societies. Many problems have already occurred. About one year after the electoral victory the main

ones seemed to be that, among other things, democratisation does not help the new government to deliver the goods to the underemployed and other groups rapidly enough.[128]

More recently new local elections were held in early 1988. The results resembled those in the 1978 state election.[129] The balance between the Left Front and its opponents is fairly even. The Left lost in many previous strongholds but made new gains elsewhere, won in the big cities, lost in most of the smaller, and won a majority in more than 50 per cent of the *panchayats*.[130]

During the late sixties, Communists in *West Bengal*, who then led a United Front government for a brief period of time, had already learned the lessons from Kerala and did not wait for central approval of more radical land reform laws, but relied instead on popular enforcement of the already present ones. On the other hand, the Bengalis were reluctant to give sharecroppers any legal right to land in order not to promote bourgeois interests in private ownership.[131] And, after some years, they transferred the responsibility for implementation from individual peasants with different interests and their organisations to the local organs of the state.

Directly after the victory of the Left Front in the 1977 West Bengal state elections, the Communists, who were lacking the same genuine rural basis as their comrades in Kerala, used their new political bastions in the central Calcutta administration to grab and to develop solid roots for local state power. Having opened up for party politics in local elections, they could also rely upon a comparatively well functioning party machinery and mass organisations.

The 1978 *panchayat* election was impressive in many respects. About 25 million voters would elect nearly 56,000 representatives at the village, block and district levels. It "was the biggest ever democratic exercise in free India electing the largest number of candidates on a single day through secret ballot. . . . (A) high degree of political activity was noticed . . . . There were very few cases of political somnolence leading to candidates being returned uncontested. . . . (T)he voters' turn-out was on an average about 70 per cent. . . . Considering the weather conditions (it was the height of a gruelling summer in early June in W. Bengal), the enthusiasm and patience of the voters in rural Bengal appeared simply unbelievable. . . . (C)ompared to Bihar's experience . . . elections witnessed little political violence. The administrative challenge of organising the poll was simply stupendous, but the whole show could pass off peacefully because of the

administrative skill of the Left Front government, the political parties' commitment to democratic norms and, above all, people's co-operation."[132] This was actually the first time that India had experienced a keen political contest at the grassroots level. Candidates had to be residents of the areas where they were contesting seats. Only the CPI-M (48,392 candidates fielded) and the Congress-I (28,126 candidates)[133] were able to make a strong showing all over West Bengal. Most importantly, the CPI-M captured about two-thirds of all *panchayat* seats and all districts except Darjeeling. The Party became absolutely dominant within the Left Front, except in some pockets. It gained votes not only from the poor but also from the rural "middle classes", thereby undermining previous alliances between such groups as rich and middle peasants. The rural roots of the Congress-I party began to be undermined. Finally, when West Bengal was severely hit by floods only a couple of months after the elections, the new *panchayats* were instrumental in the distribution of relief to the victims.[134]

In the next local elections (May 1983), the CPI-M was less victorious. Besides the fact that the Congress-I party was more alert than it had been in 1978, and that there was some disunity within the Left Front, there was also discontent over the way in which the Communists had governed the *panchayats* during the first period. (I will soon return to the latter point.) The CPI-M lost some 4,000 seats or about 10 per cent; the Left Front as a whole somewhat more. Despite this, the CPI-M itself controlled about 60 per cent of the seats.[135]

In February 1988, however, the Left Front in general and the CPI-M in particular regained their previous losses. The CPI-M won about 66 per cent of the seats, the Left Front partners a bit more than 7 per cent while Congress-I received only 23 per cent. This was despite many disputes within the Left Front, an attempt from the Naxalites[136] to make a peaceful comeback (which totally failed), and criticism against the CPI-M for hegemonic behaviour and malpractices in the local governments. This time more than 75 per cent of the electorate cast their votes.[137]

Real powers were decentralised to the *panchayats*. Most rural development programmes were assigned to them including, for example, rural works, water supply, food-for-work, irrigation, the distribution of credits together with the banks, etc. Financial resources were allocated to them, as well as some rights to carry out their own taxation. Moreover, they could administrate the land reforms, including the *Operation Barga* , and the identification of surplus land and selection

of beneficiaries. The *panchayats* were also supposed to regulate and act as a conciliator in local conflicts (between tenants and landlords or between employers and employees, for example), and to try and promote higher standards of living, including better wages, for the poor. The idea of promoting co-operation among the peasants, so called group farming for example, was also brought forward.[138]

In a recent review of various studies of the effects of agrarian reforms in West Bengal, Biplab Dasgupta concludes that the most significant impact of the rural reforms is that various old forms of patron-client relationships between landowners et al. on the one hand, and peasants and labourers on the other hand, have been severely weakened. This, however, seem to have been achieved because the latter can get alternative support and protection particularly from the new *panchayats*[139]—not necessarily because the weak themselves have become more independent and viable.

Comparing the two reforms in Kerala and West Bengal, Ronald Herring has concluded that the difference in political terms is "whether or not to risk embourgeoisement of the tenants and permanent alienation of the small stratum of rentiers. The CPI-M took that risk in Kerala, and, at least in the short term, lost. In Bengal, everything we know about tenancy reform suggests that *Operation Barga* was tailor-made to be a partisan political success—that is, tenants' rights depend on the local state, and continuation of the Party's policies at the State level."[140]

On one level Herring's assessment does not contradict the Communist thesis that political support and protection are necessary to oppose the extra-economic ways in which the present rulers sustain their positions. However, the Communists also implied that their alternative backing would liberate the producers' political and economic creativity. As far as I can see, this is where the main problems lie.

To begin with, despite the impressive decentralisation of powers, even the *panchayats* on the lowest level usually comprise several villages. Top-down approaches seem to be common. Where the CPI-M is in power, the real decisions are taken within the Party. National or even global questions rather than vital issues in the villages may dominate in local political campaigns. Emphasis is more on representation and enlightened leadership than on the participation or even consultation of those who are affected by various measures. Therefore it is a serious problem that very few of those who are elected are landless peasants and sharecroppers.[141]

We should also consider what has actually been democratised? The *panchayats* do not reach and are definitely not based on the very many parts of the "complex molecule" in the village that Gunnar Myrdal spoke about.[142] Rather it seems to be a more radical and consistent version of Nehru's étatist approach. Progressive forces contradict old loyalties, not least those based on caste. But this also means that traditional forms of self-help are eroded. These are mainly replaced by state intervention. In between the individual and family on the one hand and the government on the other there is, thus, very little.[143]

Co-operatives could have been there. But the Communists have been and, despite some statements among intellectuals, still are very sceptical towards this idea.[144] The reason is primarily political. If you cannot control the co-operatives through the Party but have to rely on the strength of some few sympathising peasants, there is an obvious risk that the weaker ones will get lost—and that the better-off will take over. There are, of course, ways of approaching such problems, if the Party and the peasant movement could and wanted to. But these organisations include not only weak peasants but also a generously defined middle peasantry cum petty landlords. In fact, the Communists have not actively done much to improve the viability of the weaker producers through co-operation—and thereby not only promoting growth but also extending democratisation beyond the traditional political institutions, and basing the *panchayati raj* on a more equally governed local economy. Hence, the weak peasants et al. are not entrusted and empowered, nor united on the basis of their only prime resource—their ability to work and to produce—but are given some (although not negligible) support and protection, and are being mobilised in favour of top-down campaigns.[145]

Adding to this is the fact that radical forces in general have not, not even from above, and I must stress this again, made much effort to promote production, but rather have given priority to political mobilisation and change, and more equitable distribution of the present pie.[146] It is true that there has been more interest in stimulating growth during recent years. But then, who can—under the present circumstances—promote production and how? Weak, non-cooperating producers or the viable and somewhat better-off?

The problem is also how the *panchayats* are controlled and run. Independent observers, not to mention CPI-M's political opponents, report on malpractices, preferential treatment of people who are vital to those who are in control or who are simply able to pay in one way or another.[147] Even the chairman of the ruling Left Front Committee

admitted in early 1980 that the money provided by the government to the *panchayats* for relief of the people was no doubt insufficient but "it was sufficient to breed corruption".[148] And during the 11th National Congress of the CPI-M it was stated that "(w)hen running the Government, *panchayats* or other organisations, work is not always done according to collective decisions and through the direction of the concerned Party committees. . . . In many cases such defects have been noticed."[149] The losses in the 1983 local elections were often blamed on such practices.[150] It has also been noted that *panchayats* bodies have delayed and distorted the implementation of programmes that could cause conflicts, such as *Operation Barga* or the identification of surplus land which should be distributed to poor and landless peasants.[151] Finally, many people, not only those related to the CPI-M, often maintain that "some" or "certain" parties of the Left Front attract fairly well-off villagers who, for the time being, find that the best possible way of defending their interests is to help themselves to good contacts within even fairly radical governments and their administration.[152]

All this is nothing to be surprised about. To begin with, malpractices within local governments and administration in India are very common and widespread. As far as I understand, the problems in West Bengal are less than those in most other Indian states. Moreover, since unusually large amounts of power have been transferred to the *panchayats*, it is inevitable that serious and difficult struggles will take place within them. And since there have been severe limits on ownership of land etc., control over the limited but strategic resources within the local organs of the state is naturally a good alternative if and when one wants to "advance".

It has been argued that the problems can hardly be serious, since the Left Front in general and the CPI-M in particular were actually able to gain votes in the last local elections—otherwise people would simply get rid of them.[153] This, however, brings me back to my main argument. Unfortunately, poor people in West Bengal may vote Communist for the same main reason that motivates other poor people in other places to support, instead, reactionary parties—they simply stand by the best possible patron. *The most serious problem* is, therefore, that various land reforms may have made the weak villagers strong enough to break with many old patrons, but has not empowered them with sufficient autonomy to exercise firm control over their new Communist patrons, and to develop their own political and economic creativity.

While still in power, the Rajiv Gandhi government proposed a central state offensive to implement, guide, and partly finance *Panchayati Raj* all over India. There were good reasons to support those, including the CPI-M, who warned against increasing union state interventionism at the expense of state and local autonomy.[154] But an even more important effect may have been that the politically successful Communist patronage which I have discussed would have become quite vulnerable in face of more powerful patronage from the union government.

Disunity on Scattered Land

If, according to the Communists, the majority of the rural masses can and should be united on the basis of a common hunger for land—were they united, or were other interests and conflicts decisive?

In Java, the PKI's Central Committee meeting of December 1963 became the launching-pad for a rural offensive.[155] The Communists were to mobilise peasants to participate in mass actions, involving 90 per cent of the villagers, in defence of the rights of poor and landless peasants in accordance with President Sukarno's land reform laws. Distinctions between so-called feudal landlords, rich peasants, middle peasants, and others were not so important. The enemy was, quite simply, everyone who either had land, which, according to the law, could be redistributed, or kept sharecroppers who were given too small a share of the harvest, as well as those who backed up these "landlords". The rest could either remain neutral or join in the struggle for reform.

There are strong indications that many Communist leaders were convinced that they were protected from bitter confrontations and the outbreak of naked violence, because they stressed mass actions to isolate feudal landlords and could rely upon Sukarno's own land reform laws.

The kinds of actions that were officially backed by the Party and its peasant organisation included the supervision of land registration, the exposure of false information, the encouragement of the poor and landless to demand their rights according to the law, and a commitment to their protection. Sharecroppers were advised to keep 60 per cent of the harvest, and divide the rest equally between the state and the landowner, until the landlord agreed to obey the provisions of the law (equal division of the net harvest). And the sharecroppers on land which was to be redistributed did not need to deliver rent at all to the landlord,

in anticipation of the implementation of their legal right to the land they were tilling.

However, in addition to this the Communists conducted a powerful propaganda campaign with more advanced demands—"land to the tiller". They also aired their criticism that the upper limit for land ownership was too high. As I understand it, this propaganda campaign may have been more effective than the government's own information about the content of the laws. Simultaneously, more and more people became aware of the loopholes and the inefficient implementation of the current laws—plus experienced a very bad harvest due to drought and a serious invasion of rats. Thus, tough action spread. Frustrated peasants took their own initiatives, overstepping the limits of the laws, and tried partly to force the kind of radical land reform advocated by the Communists, but which the Communists had not encouraged people to pursue by means of concrete action.

In June 1964, these confrontations were the major national question. President Sukarno tried to reconcile the parties, but the conflicts only grew worse, particularly in East Java. What was more: there were often splits between the peasants. Far less than 90 per cent of the villagers were involved in mass actions to isolate the so-called feudal landlords.

Poor and landless peasants disputed who should have the right to the few pieces of land which could be redistributed. A poor share-cropper might well be working on land which was mortgaged, while a poor peasant laid claim to it as land which should be returned to him. Many landowners with far less than the official ceiling on ownership were threatened.[156] A considerable number of peasants, not only the so called feudal landlords, had sharecroppers—while they themselves might very well share-crop someone else's land. And so on.

Many poor and landless peasants clearly chose to seek protection, not in a class collective, but from their patrons and their political as well as religious organisations. In East Java, politically extreme Muslims rapidly succeeded in turning the conflicts into a religious question, for or against Islam. And in most places the political organisations pitted peasant against peasant.

In mid-1964 some PKI leaders tried to impose more discipline among the activists. In November, the peasant front in East Java admitted that there was chaos in the villages. In December, Chairman Aidit declared that opponents had succeeded in splitting the peasants. The Communists tried to retreat—and Sukarno mediated. But the divisions and the conflicts continued. Finally, when the army under

General Suharto, from October 1965 onwards, clamped down on all opponents who could be related to communism, huge parts of rural Java were turned into killing fields.

Obviously, there was not a sufficiently obvious land monopoly for the peasantry to be able to unite on questions of land reform and isolate what the Communists believed were a few feudal landlords. On the contrary, different immediate interests caused most of the villagers to link up with various patrons, which opened up infighting among the poor.

Communists in *Kerala* managed to uphold a comparatively broad unity in the struggle for land reform. This holds true particularly in Malabar, in the north, where the landlords were in control of rather large areas of land.

However, leaving aside problems of sub-tenancy, many tenants were also rather big landholders who had achieved substantial holdings through the land reform. Many had to employ labourers. Conflicts between the new owners and the workers developed, while the CPI-M had many followers in both camps. Quite a few ex-tenants who had supported Communist anti-feudal policies shifted their political loyalties. Voting strongholds have become highly insecure. Some CPI-M leaders, but not the CPI (at least not openly[157]), now talk about new "kulaks".[158]

Further south, there were more petty owners in addition to big landholders.[159] The agricultural workers were also more frequent. The Communists often maintained that there was a lack of surplus land to distribute.[160] (The official arguments shifted. The CPI-M seems to have referred mainly to the necessity of upholding a broad unity, while the CPI, with a larger share of their followers among landholders, spoke about the need for viable units in order to develop production.[161]) It was thus mainly tenants, not the workers, who could gain land through the reform. The Communists argued that the workers should instead get better wages and working conditions. The CPI-M, with its main basis among the workers, gave priority to their struggles for a better living during the late sixties. But even many small new owners of land employed labourers.(According to one study from the late sixties, family labour did not dominate even on units with less than one acre of land.) Again, serious conflicts appeared; and other groups, not just the comparatively big landowners, turned against the radical Communists. Broad political alliances could not be upheld. After some time, the CPI-

M had to retreat and emphasise the need for reconciliation. For example, the CPI-M negotiated lower wages for the workers on friendly weaker farmers' land than on other units.[162] Struggles for higher agricultural prices (preferably addressed to the central government, especially when the Communists have been inside the state administration) have been tried as a way to please both weak and better-off farmers, as well as their workers, who could perhaps look forward to higher wages should their employers make more profit.[163] At best, the Communists have not made big electoral losses.

To this we could add that there were both big and small tenants, as well as wealthy and poor landlords—while the land reform laws usually considered them as unified groups and, thus, reproduced or even increased the differences.[164] Just before the land reforms were implemented, the poor tenants (those who leased a housesite and some land) owned virtually no land of their own and their income was far below that of the other 50 per cent of the tenants. Most of the former, among whom there were naturally also differences, must have earned their main income from selling their labour. The incomes of the affluent tenants were more than 60 per cent higher than those of the poor tenants—but also more than 15 per cent higher than the owner-cultivators. About half of all tenants controlled more than 95 per cent of all land held by tenants. Furthermore, the fairly well-off tenants owned more than 30 per cent of the land that they operated. Some were comparatively large landholders. They were also the main winners. According to one calculation, rich peasants were 13.3 per cent of the households but received 38.7 per cent of the land redistributed via tenancy reforms.[165]

On the other hand, most landlords owned little land. Only 13 per cent of the landlords owned 25 acres or more. This group owned almost 75 per cent of all the landlords' land. And almost 18 per cent of land possessed by the landlords was actually leased in.

In fact, not even 20 per cent of the landlords, but well above 30 per cent of the well-off tenants, belonged to the highest income category. Only a minority (a bit more than 40 per cent) of all households with some stake in land were relying primarily on agriculture for their income. And only a quarter of all the households who owned land had at least one member engaged in agriculture.

Clearly, land reforms were not only insufficient but also sustained many inequalities and implied serious divisions among the peasants in general. If we, finally, turn to contemporary Kerala, this becomes even

more obvious. When I spoke to Communist leaders in 1985, many of them were still convinced of the need to fulfil previous land reform ideas, to try to uphold broad unity in the rural areas, and to thereby regain what they had lost in terms of votes etc.[166] Only two years later they were, to everybody's (including their own) surprise, able to win the 1987 state elections. And despite efforts from the opposition to regroup itself, the figures were much the same in the recent local elections in early 1988.[167] But these successes were not because they relied on the "old" ideas. At least in 1987 they made even further losses in their previous rural strongholds.[168] On the contrary they gave, among other things and as we know, an emphasis to the severe problems of all those who did not gain from the earlier reforms—many of whom are now lacking jobs—and to democratisation.

When the Communists in the 1967 United Front government in *West Bengal* intensified the struggle for the implementation of previous land reform laws, they hardly got started before serious divisions occurred within the Party as well as within the peasantry over what path to take, especially in Naxalbari. I will come back to this, two chapters later.

During its next period within the state government in 1969, the CPI-M was, initially, more successful. The case of Sonarpor, 24 Parganas is illustrative.[169]

To begin with, the laws that the Bengali Communists tried to implement did not, as in Kerala, at first hand aim at doing away with all landlordism, by giving land to the tenants, but rather at implementing a ceiling on the ownership of land. Therefore, when Communist militants identified and occupied surplus land (partly like the militants in Java had done earlier in the sixties) this was not distributed to tenants who, in addition to what they had traditionally leased in, owned more than (according to the law) two acres, but only to landless labourers. Harsh conflicts occurred. Evicted tenants and in other ways threatened middle peasants turned away from the CPI-M. If they had not already tried to link up with the comparatively big landowners by (illegally) buying the surplus land of the latter, they did so now—and were, of course, attacked by the landless. Less extreme members of the United Front Government, including the CPI, offered their support—not to the big landowners but to the suffering tenants and middle peasants. What mattered now was not only one's legal status but also which organisation, or rather which patron, one could rely upon.

Moreover, the CPI-M gave priority to the mobilisation of as many people as possible in order to get rid of the big landowners.

However, in doing so they not only alienated many tenants and middle peasants, but also some of the initial beneficiaries. The little plot of land that one tiller had received could, after some time, be subject to further distribution to other tillers as well.

In addition, since one of the main ways in which big landowners had tried to by-pass the laws had been to turn their surplus land into fisheries, the land-hungry tillers mobilised by the CPI-M also took over these units, aiming at reconverting them into arable land that could be distributed. However, the fisheries had offered extremely important employment opportunities for many agricultural workers—who now lost their jobs. Again, these workers were also looking for alternative patronage and left the ideal broad front. These conflicts became quite violent, eventually resulting in the deaths of some sharecroppers.

Just after the fall of the second United Front government, the leader of the militant Sonarpur movement, Jayanta Bhattacharyya, himself stated that it had been impossible to uphold a reasonable broad front.[170] In the following years, especially after CPI-M's defeat in the 1972 elections, the militants and their followers in Sonarpur lost most of what they had gained and experienced a harsh repression. When I visited Jayanta and some of his comrades in Sonarpur in 1985, he claimed that he would not mind a more radical opposition against the contemporary fairly well-off farmers, but that there were no longer enough big landowners against whom one could and should try to mobilise the peasantry (including the landless) as a whole.[171]

By 1971, the former CPI-M minister of Land Revenue Konar maintained that because there had been no excesses against middle peasants in the district of Burdwan, it had been possible to uphold a broad peasant movement there.[172] Would such tactics be enough? When the first Left Front government came to power in 1977, the CPI-M tried, as we know, to implement a much more cautious but also comprehensive line.

As I see it, the by now familiar concept reflected the problems of upholding an all-peasant line on the question of land. Local legally elected organs of the state, the *panchayats*, rather than militant peasants themselves, should implement further reforms and mediate in various conflicts. There should be no separate organisation for agricultural workers (as in Kerala, for example). Their interests should be reconciled with those of their employers within the old peasant movement. The Communists spoke openly about the lack of surplus land to distribute to the landless— and quite openly about the serious conflicts among the peasantry as a whole as well as within the Party, and the mass

movements that a lower ceiling on land would cause. (At present the Party is for instance somewhat hesitant as to whether or how an amended land reform law, which plugs various previous loopholes, can be implemented.) Emphasis should be given to the protection of the sharecroppers through the *Operation Barga*. But ownership of land should not be transferred from the landlords to the tenants as had been done in Kerala, and those who leased out land should be compensated through various favourable programmes.

I would maintain that these policies have enabled the CPI-M to contain most of the conflicts over land. And as we have already noted, re-peasantisation does not go far toward generating economic growth. But as long as the pie is not expanding, and everyone can get a bit more of what surplus is produced, the conflicts over land, among other things, are latent. There are, for example, reports on controversies between tenants who rely on different patrons cum parties etc.[173] Against this, Biplab Dasgupta has argued that if two sharecroppers fight, it is a class struggle anyway since one is usually loyal to his landlord.[174] But the real problem is, of course, that we have to explain why one sharecropper prefers to hang on to his patron rather than, according to Communist predictions, joining the broad front. Could it be, for example, that both of the fighting sharecroppers have perfectly "clean" interests of their own which are simply very difficult to combine? Moreover, there might not always be significant qualitative differences between landlord patronage and, for example, Communist patronage.

Also, the *Operation Barga* almost came to a standstill after some years. As I hinted at in the discussion about viability and investment opportunities, there are many petty landlords and not only poor tenants. Very many households sell as well as buy labour. More than three-fourths of the households that lease out land own no more than five acres.[175] Thus, not only the well-off landlords, but also the petty ones, oppose better conditions for sharecroppers.[176] On the other hand, not all of the petty landlords are poor—some get substantial incomes from other sources, for example as civil servants or from business. As I have already maintained above, it is misleading to study only the ownership of land in order to analyse the decisive contradictions in the rural areas.[177]

On the other hand, even if more than one-third of the tenants are pure share-croppers,[178] one-third own at least between one and five acres.[179] Just as in Kerala, it is therefore the better-off tenants who gain

the most from the land reforms—while weaker petty landlords might lose.

Moreover, there are even more complicated relations, such as sub-leasing of land, or instances where those who have leased out land are then employed as workers on their own plots, etc. Even if agricultural labourers are not as numerous and not as often combined with the ownership or at least the operation of small plots of land, as in Kerala, similar complicated relations often occur. Most labourers have no permanent jobs or fixed relations with an employer. In addition to this, the labour markets seem to be affected by various exclusionary arrangements, even if personal loyalties between the employer and employee might not always be as important as they used to be. And the price on labour often varies even locally.[180]

To wind up, in Java it was not even possible to unite the peasantry as a whole in the struggle for a basic anti-feudal land reform. Landlords big enough to unite against, were lacking. Diverging interests among the peasantry as a whole became predominant. Those who were supposed to unite instead followed different patrons cum parties.

In north Kerala, similar problems occurred mainly after landlordism had been done away with. But further south, with much more complicated land relations and very many rural workers, problems of different interests became decisive during the implementation of the anti-feudal reform. Thereafter, not only the CPI but also the previously much more radical CPI-M has tried to reconcile most of the parties involved—and have kept a low profile on most issues related to land. However, they have not been able to tackle the main problems of development and better standards of living, including at least employment, for the people. Old Communist strongholds have turned rather weak. This paved the way for the recent policy changes in 1987, when issues of increased production, the creation of employment etc., through interventions from democratised central and local organs of the state as well as co-operatives, were brought to the forefront—and gave the Communists a new lease on life, at least temporarily and in terms of new votes in the urban areas.

In West Bengal, on the other hand, serious problems of division within the peasantry occurred, also during the attempts at implementing basic land reform laws—but not least because the anti-feudal interests of the tenants were by-passed and priority given directly to the very landless and poor peasants. Thereafter, however, the difficulties are again, in principle, similar to the recent ones in Kerala. The

Communists have, most obviously since 1977, played down the most heated issues of land and tried to reconcile everyone from poor labourers to well-off peasants. Again, this leads to the problems of moving ahead. Or, as Biplab Dasgupta said recently: "You know, after the reforms, every measure affects more people. Thus we must be careful."[181]

Who are the Landless?

If, according to the Communists, most agricultural labourers are dispossessed landless peasants whose land has been expropriated by landlords, and, thus, they should get it back—is there, then, enough "surplus land" due to previous proletarianisation available to be redistributed and do the landless get any?

At this stage we keep aside the landless tenants. Sharecroppers may not necessarily have lost the land that they rent. But their land is at least physically present and may be allocated to them, either in the form of ownership, as in Kerala, or by giving them and their families the sole right to operate it during generations ahead, as in West Bengal and as was stipulated in Java. The chances for the beneficiaries to become viable and dynamic on small plots of land have already been discussed. And the problems of treating sharecroppers and agricultural workers as a unified group with equal rights to land above ceilings were touched upon in the previous sub-section on divisions within the peasantry as a whole, particularly in relation to Java and West Bengal in the late sixties. Therefore, what remains to be discussed is the analysis of the agricultural workers who were labelled landless peasants[182] and promised a share of the so-called surplus land once the anti-feudal distribution of land from landlords to tenants had been dealt with. Had these landless peasants been deprived of land and did they get anything in return?

Such questions have wide implications. One could, and perhaps should, start by discussing the history of the control and distribution of land in Java, in Kerala, and in West Bengal. When and how did landless villagers become important? This is really too big a task to dwell upon here. Moreover, since the contemporary situation is usually approached in terms of the concentration of land, we have to start by at least asking what one can really measure and what conclusions one can draw.

The PKI itself made some case studies in the early sixties, and claimed (of course) that it had found many instances of high concentration.[186] On the other hand, scholarly studies carried out after 1965, when most of the distributed land was taken back and the so-called green revolution was implemented, and, thus, the process of concentration can hardly have been less important than during the "old order", do not indicate any radical process of proletarianisation. The number of agricultural labourers does not seem to have grown faster than the number of holdings between 1930 and 1961. Figures from 1961 onward indicate a very slow growth of the agricultural labour force; between 1976 and 1982 it was even declining while the number of foodcrop holdings was growing.[187] Most farms today are still very small, and the largest account for only something like one-fifth of the total arable land. (On Central Java, according to the 1971 census, holdings above four hectares accounted for less than 10 per cent of the area.)[188] Also, substantial amounts of land were not private and directly redistributable, but formally public and allocated to village officials (*tanah bengkok* land).[189] I will return to these and more recent results—some of which indicate increasing though not drastic concentration of land and proletarianisation—three chapters ahead in a discussion about contemporary approaches to the land issue.

Agricultural wage labour was unusually predominant in *Kerala.* It was the largest single occupational category in 1971 containing more than 30 per cent of those employed. The figure for 1981 was about 28 per cent. ("Cultivators" came next with about 18 per cent in 1971 and about 13 per cent in 1981.)[190]

Further, the concentration of ownership of land in this area is still the highest in India. This, however, does not signal growing percentage of land concentrated by some few big farmers and increasing proletarianisation among the many, but is due to increasing fragmentation of the many small holdings.[191] Moreover, as early as by 1951, almost 50 per cent of the workforce was employed outside agriculture as against approximately 30 per cent in all of India.[192] The last figures on Kerala are about another 10 per cent higher.[193] Also, the landholdings are small. From 1970/71 to 1980/81 the average size has come down from 0.57 to 0.43 of a hectare. The holdings of less than one acre were 85 per cent in 1970/71 and 89.2 per cent in 1980/81.[194] And from around 1956 to 1971 the number of landless workers decreased. Krishnaji finds it hard to talk about outright proletarianisation.[195]

Was there any "surplus land"? As usual, plantations were exempted from the land reform. But more importantly, large owners in Kerala leased out most of their land before the reforms. Thus, their land was mainly redistributed through the tenancy provisions. Thereafter there was very little land left above the ceilings. Almost two million acres (about 43 per cent of the net sown area in the state excluding plantations crops) were transferred (as we know unequally) to about 1.3 million tenants (well above 40 per cent of the households). On the other hand, only close to 48,000 acres of land above the ceiling were distributed in the early eighties to a bit more than 75,000 families.[196]

As we know, the Kerala Communists did not have any illusions about their chances of solving the problems of the agricultural labourers by distributing land to them. In the last sub-section we will return to their alternative attempts at bettering the workers' standard of living. Nevertheless, in 1957 their government thought that there was at least 1.75 million acres of surplus land above the ceiling. Ten years later the estimate was between 115,000 and 150,000 acres.[197] And as I just indicated, at the most only 48,000 of these acres had actually been distributed more than ten years later.

The reasons for this are very much the same as in Java. There were more but still relatively few, visible large-scale holdings that could be disclosed. Those with a vested interest in the land could draw upon alternative sources of power in order to bypass the laws. In both cases, this was despite both intensive and widespread Communist-led mobilisation and actions.[198] The implementation was anticipated by various donations etc., and delayed and sabotaged through political and administrative manipulations. Due to very hard struggles at the grassroots level, there were, however, on top of the little surplus land that was actually distributed, more than 265,000 hutment dwellers who gained house and garden sites. This was very important in terms of basic security.[199]

The expropriation of tillers' land is an old phenomenon in *West Bengal* even if it was speeded up during direct colonisation under the British, and there are good reasons to describe many sharecroppers as descendants of former independent peasants.[200]

Nevertheless, if we consider contemporary rural labourers, it was mainly during the sixties that a rapid increase of agricultural workers took place. The figure for 1961 was just above 15 per cent. Ten years later, it was well above 26 per cent. And 44 per cent of the agricultural workforce were hired labour—as against about 26 per cent in 1951. Was

this due to proletarianisation? And why is it that figures on the next period, from 1971 to 1981, do not indicate further increases? Rather, the proportion of agricultural labourers has come down by about two percentage units. At the same time, there are figures indicating that the concentration of landownership has decreased. While more than 20 per cent of the households were landless in the mid-fifties, the figure was about 10 per cent in 1971, prior to the last reforms.[201]

There is no clear-cut explanation. It is not sufficient to refer to redistributive measures within the land reform programmes, and in addition the population has, of course, increased[202] and land has been further fragmented through inheritance. Even though the proportion of labourers outside agriculture did increase during the seventies,[203] there is definitely no exodus to either industry, trade or the service sector. During the fifties and sixties, when landowners tried to anticipate the land reform laws, quite a few share-croppers were evicted, there was some development of irrigation and land was turned into fishponds, etc. Thereby, wage labour increased despite the fact that nobody, necessarily, lost any land. Also, those who own—but do not operate—land, quite often small holdings, have increased. They might prefer to hire in labour rather than to rent out land. We must also take account of the fact that many of the new owner cultivators seem to possess marginal holdings, and thus often combine this with wage labour on others' plots. (Holdings above ten acres have decreased and the middle category, five to ten acres, is fairly stable, while those below have increased.)[204]

The general conclusion, therefore, is that no substantial outright proletarianisation has taken place but rather pauperisation has. Share-croppers are partly turned into labourers, and an increasing number of the landowners also have to sell their labour. This is in sharp contrast with the ideal historical case of proletarianisation in England.[205]

Was there enough land above the ceilings to redistribute? We will set aside the radical break up of the *zamindari* system in West Bengal during the fifties and concentrate on the Communists' experiences from the late sixties and onwards. Malpractices similar to the ones reviewed in the cases of Java and Kerala had existed for a long time. As we know, the CPI-M made great efforts in 1969 to identify and distribute "surplus land", but failed due to a shortage of land and to disunity within the peasantry as a whole. Following this it almost became official Communist policy to stress the lack of reasonable quality land above the ceilings, and the political impossibility of attempting radical redistribution, not least because of the problem of identifying beneficiaries without causing serious conflicts.[206] Others, including the

Land Commissioner, still claim that there are at least one million acres of land that could be distributed, and that new land reform laws make it theoretically possible to implement such a policy. However, it is likely that this will not take place.[207]

On the one hand, West Bengal represents about one quarter of the land taken in for redistribution in India as a whole. On the other hand, this surplus land in West Bengal is only about 8 per cent of the total cultivated area. And by 1978 the figure for land declared surplus was 1.12 million acres, out of which more than 92 per cent came under the 1953 act against the old *zamindari* system in Bengal. This main part of the "surplus land" is thus not strictly comparable with other Indian ceiling laws. In 1986, about 1.3 million acres of land had been declared surplus land, 1.1 million acres had been taken possession of and about 0.8 million acres had been redistributed among some 1.7 million beneficiaries—about half an acre each. According to an extensive survey carried out by Nripen Bandyopadhyay in 1982, only about 20 per cent of the landless households had received surplus land. Other figures on the macro level indicate, however, that almost one half of the landless and marginal households, estimated to be some 3.5 million, may have received tiny plots of surplus land.[208] Finally, the allocation of homestead plots has not been as massive and important as in Kerala, even if implementation has improved in recent years.[209]

To sum up, the general picture is quite clear. Neither in Java in the early sixties, nor in Kerala or in West Bengal today, is there enough "surplus land" due to previous proletarianisation available for redistribution to agricultural labourers, or so-called landless peasants. Land is not concentrated into large holdings. The concentration of ownership varies. In some cases there is no increase at all, but rather more owners of marginal plots. The number of rural wage labourers has increased but they do not seem to be there mainly because of the expropriation of land. (Instead it is chiefly because of the increasing population, more off-farm jobs, less tenants, more hired labour on even tiny lots and so on.) Finally, the concentration of *control* of land is often, and perhaps mainly, due to the ownership of or control over other necessary resources and capacities (including political), rather than redistributable land.

Labourers in a Rural Stalemate

If, according to the Communists, rural labour will benefit from land reforms, even when they cannot get much "surplus land", because their employers do not have to pay rent and thus can further develop production—do labourers get "their share" of the "rent fund" and of further economic development?

The land reform in Java was never implemented to the extent that this question can be addressed in a consistent way. During the struggle for implementation, however, there were problems of upholding production and distribution. At this stage in our discussion, it does not matter to what extent this was due to the conflicts over land reform. What we should take note of is that rural (and urban) labour, who could not fall back on much if any land of their own, were the real victims.[210] However, as long as the Communist organisations were fairly strong in rural Java, various development packages and mechanisation schemes, which might have completely marginalised weak peasants and labourers without offering them anything instead, were blocked. And the most convincing explanation for most of the exclusionary labour arrangements (empowering the employer to get rid of, select, and buy whatever labour he may prefer) that have flourished after 1965 is that the destruction of the peasant and labour movements made them possible.[211]

Even if priority was given to the tenants in *Kerala*, Communists were also rooted among the (by Indian standards) unusually many agricultural labourers, eager to defend and better their positions. Besides wages, it was mainly their restricted relations vis-á-vis the employers, and their inability to bargain independently, that was focused upon. Workers stressed "four fears" : insecurity of employment, fear of losing priority of employment in the slack season, fear of eviction from housesites, and "fear of recall of loans which can never be repaid".[212]

The Communists' approach was quite similar to the one applied on the trade union front in relation to plantations and other industry-like workplaces. Besides early attempts at preventing evictions from the hutsites and small plots for cultivation rented in by labourers, there were intensive and quite successful struggles for minimum wages and against police intervention in conflicts between employers and employees. Industrial relations committees were introduced within which representatives of the cultivators, the labourers, and the

government were to negotiate wages, working hours, etc. There was also a Debt Relief Bill, and many organisations actively fought against attempts to modernise agriculture by introducing tractors, etc., thereby displacing workers.[213]

In the mid- and late-sixties it was obvious that the land reform measures mainly benefited the somewhat better-off tenants. Simultaneously, after 1964, the then two Communist parties were actively involved in struggles over the control of members and sympathisers. New organisations for rural labour were set up separately from the peasant movements. The CPI-M took upon itself the task of leading militant agricultural workers' actions—particularly against the new minority government led by the CPI (and supported by Indira Gandhi's Congress Party), which in the late sixties replaced the former United Front administration and thus isolated the CPI-M. Hutsites were occupied, land above the ceilings was detected and grabbed, higher wages and better working conditions were enforced. The Government also tried to give workers some relief through other measures, such as a housing scheme. The legal response was the so-called Magna Carta of the toiling masses, the 1974 Agricultural Workers Act. This, among other things, included improved rules on minimum wages and working conditions as well as the settlement of disputes, and new provisions for total security of employment for attached workers.[214]

The intensive workers' struggle—there were, for example, 73 filed conflicts in 1966/67 vis-à-vis 5026 in 1976/77 [215]—was quite successful. Wage increases relative to productivity were the highest in India, at least until the mid-seventies.[216] But the conflicts between employers and employees caused serious divisions between not only big landowners and their labourers, but also between petty peasants (who were frequently also wage labourers) and their workers. Many petty cultivators turned against the CPI-M-led movements in particular.

Neither has the outcome over the years in terms of the workers' standard of living been encouraging. This is not only because of the slow development of production[217] and the farmers' complaints about losing control over the work-process. The latter are also afraid that their labourers may become permanent employees, while underemployment is increasing. Those who are non-permanent labourers may actually be less secure than earlier. It is difficult even for militant labour organisations to always demand pay according to the minimum wage levels.[218]

Previous forms of security within the framework of patron-client relations have also disappeared. But neither the popular organisations

nor the state government have funds enough to offer reliable alternatives.[219] The modest new pension scheme for agricultural labourers, for example, which was introduced by the Left Front government that briefly run Kerala in the early eighties, is very difficult to finance.[220]

Attempts at stimulating production by paying the farmers better prices are not only difficult because of a lack of funds. Even if it was so easy to increase production, the workers, who would have to pay higher food prices, are many more in number than the cultivators, and consume much more rice than can be paid for by what they receive in harvest wages (presumably even if better prices for the farmers might result in somewhat higher wages).[221]

The younger generations often face new problems. Their parents might have gained a hutsite, but this is hardly big enough for further divisions. Their parents might have benefited enough from the reforms to give their children a better education, but the educated also have difficulties in finding a job. It is not only the agricultural sector which is stagnating. If one has a labour market value in the Gulf countries, one may temporarily migrate. But the money which can sent home is rarely invested in a productive way, and there are still very few jobs to apply for when you are no longer needed overseas and have to return home again.[222] This is the case for many at the time of my writing this, 1988 and 1989.

The tertiary sector is expanding. Much Gulf money and some jobs exist in this sector. But the progressive forces in general and the Communists in particular have rarely payed any attention to it—not even to the many petty traders et al. They (as well as the tribal population) have not benefited from agrarian reforms and have not been organised within the framework of the unions.[223]

It was mainly these problems that, finally, caused the Communists to change some of their priorities in the 1987 elections and to promise emphasis upon the development of production, the creation of new jobs etc. But at least under Rajiv Gandhi, New Delhi was reluctant to supplement funds which are somewhat politically difficult to gather locally. And when private capitalists, such as the Birlas, are asked to at least resume their industrial production, the government as well as the unions are in a very weak bargaining position, just as in the late fifties.[224]

Agricultural labourers have been less important to the Communists in *West Bengal*. Their attempts at giving priority at least to the landless

tillers in the late sixties were, as we know, disastrous. Some years later, the CPI-M emphasised the need to uphold a broad unity. No separate organisation for agricultural workers was formed: the latter would be included within the peasant movement—which, together with the *panchayats* and the Party, would defend workers as well, and reconcile the different parties.

According to Ashok Rudra, the workers are bound to lose in this situation. They have no other option but to support the CPI-M. The party, however, has a great many essentially middle and upper peasant votes that it can lose to other political forces. In addition, the easiest way for the party to reach the labourers is from above, via their peasant employers.[225]

On the other hand, Biplab Dasgupta maintains that the struggle for minimum wages is continuing, that more and more homestead plots are registered (at present about 300,000), that government programmes are creating alternative employment opportunities, and that, by now, about 80 per cent of the CPI-M all-peasant mass organisation consists of agricultural labourers. Even more importantly, the labourers have gained in self-confidence, old patron-client relations have diminished, and the rural labour market is no longer very fragmented. Generally speaking, the wages do not vary with different employers and in different villages; even if female workers are still discriminated against.[226]

Again, this is contradicted by not only surveys from the late seventies,[227] and more recent case studies,[228] but also by detailed and solid studies of local labour markets.[229] The general picture which emerges is one of a subordinated role for the workers, very cautious activities for minimum wages, compromises with weak employers, highly segmented labour markets and so on. It has also been pointed out that, in addition to other bonds, many labourers still own small plots of land which prevent them from being free to move to the best paying jobs in the peak season.[230] And we should not forget the existence of many poor artisans and other "self-employed" who live in the rural areas.[231]

If we now add the previous analysis of the poor development of agricultural production, and look at the outcome of socio-economic and political conflicts in terms of standards of living, a recent re-survey of villages and households in West Bengal comparing the situation in the mid-seventies with that in the mid-eighties seems to confirm the pessimistic line. There has been little change in consumption standards in terms of food, and only a minor improvement when it comes to non-

food articles. The situation for the workers has not changed, and certain tenants have fallen behind. Generally speaking there has been some improvement in the households' stocks of consumer durables, but not among non-scheduled caste/tribe households, which are almost always selling their labour, and not when it comes to basic necessities such as clothing and footwear. Housing standards are also declining, especially for the non-scheduled castes and tribes. The only considerable improvement reported is in the area of social consumption, such as the supply of drinking water and other infrastructural facilities —but we know little about how they are distributed among different socio-economic groups.[232]

My general *conclusion* is, therefore, that even when the Communists have tried hard to help agricultural labourers to a "fair share" of the "rent fund" and further economic gains, they have been forced to retreat for two main reasons. Firstly, serious conflicts developed within the broad all-peasant front which they tried to uphold. Secondly, these conflicts could not be solved by distributing the fruits of further economic growth, since agricultural production had hardly developed. As a result, the further development of rural capitalism and proletarianisation has been retarded—but not altered. In the meantime, the Communists are busy trying to mobilise peasants of all kinds, as well as rural labour, against evil forces outside the rural areas in general, and the state in particular, which are said to prevent further development. I shall return to these attempts at finding a way out of the stalemate in Chapter Four.

NOTES

1. See Törnquist (1989), Chapter 1 and the sections "National Bourgeois Agrarian Change?" plus "Extra-economic Options".
2. For the course of events referred to in this sub-section, see especially Nossiter (1982).
3. For an analysis of the historical dimensions of the agrarian scene, see Varghese (1970).
4. Amartya Sen (1986), pp. 33-37.
5. For his own analysis, see Namboodiripad (1984). Cf. also ibid. (1979).
6. The best general analyses of the land reform, including Communists' perspectives, are, in my view, Krishnaji (1979), Herring (1983), (1986), and (1988a), and Raj & Tharakan (1984).
7. In addition to the former footnote, interviews with E.M.S 1985 03 14, Mathew Kurian 1985 02 07, Achutha Menon 1985 02 10.
8. E.M.S Namboodiripad, Interview 1985 03 14.
9. Mathew Kurian, Interview 1985 02 07.
10. There were certain restrictions on poor landlords' land.
11. See e.g. George (1984).
12. Quoted from Nossiter (1982), p. 247.

13. Interviews with E.M.S 1985 03 14 and Basavapunnaiah 1985 03 12.
14. "I realise now, that a lot had to do with the tense feelings with the CPI-M. The CPI-M wanted to destroy us. We looked for support from the Congress. They looked for support from others." Interview with Achutha Menon, former Chief Minister and CPI-leader, 1985 02 10.
15. Törnquist(1989).
16. For this paragraph and the following, see Chapter 17, pp. 186-190 in Törnquist (1984).
17. Choudhury (1985), p. 136.
18. Konar (1979), pp. 44-45.
19. For readable examples related to West Bengal, see the initial articles in ibid.. Cf. also All India documents in Rasul (1974).
20. Cf. Sen Gupta (1979), p. 60.
21. Se e.g. Konar (1979), pp. 199 and 222, and cf. the debate on similar questions referred to in the Central Committee document CPI-M (1973), pp. 20-27.
22. In addition to Konar (1979) passim (on viability in case of state support, p. 168; on labourers as pauperised peasants, p. 211), see, for a relevant, fine, and concrete analysis, Mitter (1977), e.g. pp. 58 and 61f.
23. Ibid.. (e.g. p. 47) as well as my own interview with Jayanta Bhattacharaya and his comrades in Sonarpur(1985 02 28). I also draw on an interview with the former Land Reforms Commissioner D. Bandyopadhyay, 1985 03 16.
24. The new debate had already started by the end of the second United Front government. Cf. Mitter(1977) pp. 66 f.
25. This was confirmed by the Tenth Congress of the CPI-M, see the Review Report from the Congress, CPI-M (1978), and the Political Resolution from the same Congress, CPI-M (1978a) (esp. pp. 47-49). The CPI-M-led peasant movement confirmed it at its 23rd conference in Varanasi, see AIKS (1979). The new general policy is still in use and has been frequently referred to even in the present debate on so-called remunerative prices, see the Central Committee document , CPI-M (1981).
26. Interviews 85 03 05.
27. In addition to the last two notes, see Sen Gupta (1979), pp. 26f, 98f, and 101-103.
28. Interview with Jayanta Bhattacharaya, 1985 02 28.
29. Interview 1985 02 19.
30. Interview 1985 03 16.
31. Interview 1985 02 21.
32. Interview 1985 03 05.
33. Interview 1985 03 05.(Mitra has since retired as Minister of Finance and been replaced by Ashim Das Gupta.)
34. Interview 1985 03 04.
35. Interviews 1985 03 14 and 1985 03 18.
36. Spelt out "off record" by one of the interviewed leaders.
37. For a general overview, see K. Ghosh (1986).
38. D. Bandyopadhyay, interview 1985 03 16. See also his booklet(1987), pp. 4 ff.
39. See Mukhopadhyay(1980).
40. Plans for new local elections had been made already in 1977, during the first United Front government, but could not be implemented due to lack of time. See ibid. p. 134.
41. I will, of course, return to what actually happened. This initial compressed version of the ideas is based on various interviews , such as with Biplab

Dasgupta and Ashok Mitra (both 1985 03 05), Ashim Das Gupta (1985 03 04), D. Bandyopadhyay (1985 03 16) and Satyabrata Sen (1985 02 29)—in addition to texts like Bandyopadhyay (1984), Dasgupta & Murty (1983?), Westergaard (1986), Ghose (1984), and Sen Gupta (1979).

42. Biplab Dasgupta in interview 1985 03 05.
43. Sen Gupta (1979), p. 117.
44. The CPI-M was and is hardly consistent on taxes. "Enemy"governments are usually accused of either taxing the peasants too highly—or of not taxing the richer peasants and landlords at all. Cf. also Politburo member Ranadive's statement against tax relief in CITU (1983), p. 18 and Surjeet Singh's ideas that "there must be better prices for all peasants ... which we will adjust by taxing the upper peasants." "But why don't you tax them in West Bengal then?" "OK, OK...you are right..." (interview 1985 03 14).
45. Dasgupta (1984).
46. Cf., for the course of events, A. Ghosh (1981).
47. Ramdass (1984).
48. Interviews with, among others, Surjeet Singh, 1985 03 14 (OT:"Are you going to stage militant struggles in order to implement the new law?" HSS:"We are thinking about it...We have to consider that after we had taken over land in 1969 and onwards we had to give it back due to repression. We lost 5-6 years...") and D. Bandyopadhyay 1985 03 16. Cf. also Basu(1986).
49. For the various paths of transition to capitalist agriculture, see Byres (1986).
50. More than 40 per cent of the operated area has been transferred from landlords to tenants. Many former landlords live in "gentile poverty on decaying estates", Herring (1988a), p. 4 f.
51. See, e.g., Raj & Tharakan (1984), p. 47 ff and Nossiter (1982), Ch 6. (There were a lot of exemptions from the laws -- public, religious, and charitable institutions, and plantations. But, for example, the big backwater-rayas in Kuttanad were hard hit at. 22 of 31 members of the local committee for"liberation struggle" (officially against communist education policies) owned more than 1000 acres. (Ibid. p. 152)
52. Cf. Ibid., pp. 169, 247. It was only sometime before the 1987 state elections that the CPI-M abstained from co-operation with communal parties; and it was only after these unexpectedly successful elections that the Communists seriously discussed not only the need but also the concrete possibilities to decentralise and democratise local government. See Tömquist (1987).
53. The Communists have been severely circumscribed by this; cf. Hardgrave (1970).
54. (A) For the following general argument, see, especially, Krishnaji (1979), Herring (1983), (1986), (1988) and (1988a), and Raj & Tharakan (1984) and Kurien (1982). I also draw on interviews with Mathew Kurian 1985 02 07 and Govinda Pillai 1985 02 06.
55. I would like to stress that, despite the electoral successes in 1987, the Communists continued to suffer in their old rural heartlands—their new votes came mainly from other groups in other areas. See Törnquist (1987), *Frontline* April 4-17, 1987, and especially the computer analysis in *Frontline*, April 18-May 1,1987.
56. See Herring (1986) and (1988a).
57. See n. beginning with capital (A) above.
58. Ibid. plus interview with Thomas Issac 1985 02 01.

59. In Kerala one frequently talks about golden "blade companies"—about which even the general secretary of the CPI-M and former chief minister in Kerala E.M.S. said, "I must confess that I'm not clear about how we can fight them and the unproductive use of money" , Interview 1985 03 14.
60. In an interview 1985 02 10, the former Chief Minister Achutha Menon of the CPI even maintained that nowadays the majority of the public officers in Trivandrum are corrupt but that the concentration upon unofficial credits is a recent phenomenon.
61. See Törnquist (1984), esp. Chs. 11 and 12. In 1960 it was the less radical Nationalist Party (with a broad following among the rural well-off on Java) and president Sukarno, not the Communists, who initiated the land reform laws.
62. Ibid., esp. Ch 17.
63. I will return to this in the fourth section below.
64. For a fine recent case study, see Zacharias (1983).
65. Besides Törnquist (1984), see Törnquist (1984a), and, for a recent exciting study focusing upon the importance of the state in the current transformation of rural Java, Hart (1986); cf. Törnquist (1989a).
66. For the struggles in Sonarpur, see Mitter (1977). I also draw on an interview with the leader of the movement, Bhattacharaya, and some of his comrades, 1985 02 28. Cf. also the conflicts in the Birbhum and Purulia districts analysed in Bose, P. K. (1984).
67. On the important question of power related to the management of water, see Bardhan (1984), Ch. 16 and Boyce (1987).
68. (A) I will return to a closer look at the panchayats in the sub-section below on Communist patronage. For an interesting study, see Westergaard(1986).
69. (B) Ibid. Cf. also Rudra (1981) and, for example, *Frontier*, 1988 02 27, p.3.
70. Cf. Herring (1986), pp. 31 ff.
71. See the sub-section below on questions related to proletarianisation and wage labour.
72. For an example, cf. Mitter's (1977) case study of Sonarpor, 24 Parganas.
73. (C)See especially, Bandyopadhyaya (1984), Chattopadhyay et al. (1983), Rudra (1981) and Harriss (1982). I would also like to mention the particularly valuable interviews and discussions with Nripen Bandyopadhyay, 1985 02 20 and 22, Boudhayan Chattopadhyay especially 1985 02 26, Maitreya Ghatah 1985 02 19, Ashok Rudra 1985 02 28 and Sunil Sengupta 1985 02 25 (see also Sengupta, Sunil (1981)!).
74. See especially Bardhan (1984), Chs. 12 and 13, and Bardhan (1982) (=Ch.13) esp. pp. 80 ff. Cf. also Dasgupta (1987) for a partly critical argument.
75. Bandyopadhyay (1978) (also 1975) and Bandyopadhyaya A. (1981).
76. (D) For the general argument see Mitra (1979) esp. Ch. 8, Chattopadhyay (1969) and Dutt (1981). Interestingly enough I can also draw on a recent interview with Biplab Dasgupta, 1988 11 17.
77. (E) Ibid. and Ghose (1984), Ch. 1, e.g.pp. 14 and 19, and 3 in Ghose (1984). See also Harriss (1982) and Harriss, B. (1982).
78. (F) Especially Rudra & Bardhan (1983), Rudra (1984) and (1987), and Bardhan (1984), Ch. 12. Cf. Dasgupta (1987).
79. I will return to the Panchayats in the sub-section on communist patronage. For the moment, see the notes above beginning with capitals A, B, C, D, E and F.
80. Cf. the common theses about a particular revolutionary potential under "family size tenancy" , see, e.g. Stinchcombe (1961) or Paige (1975).

81. See, for example,Frankel (1971), Ch. 5, Herring (1986) and (1988a) and George (1986), p. 200.
82. Herring (1984), p 224.
83. The communist agricultural workers organisations have usually resisted mechanisation, cf., for example, George (1984), p. 51f.
84. For a very interesting analysis of these questions see Herring, especially (1986) and (1988b). Cf. also Raj & Tharakan (1984), Krishnaji (1979) and George (1986), I will, however, return to a closer look at the consequences for labour when we reach the last question for evaluation of the communist theses of peasants versus landlords.
85. See, e.g., Nossiter (1982), p. 7.
86. The CPI was more eager to bet on production -- but mainly by giving protection and support to the somewhat better-off, viable, peasants. I draw mainly on interviews with the former chief minister Menon 1985 02 10, and CPI's State Secretary Balaram in Kerala, 1985 02 03.
87. Cf. in addition to Raj & Tharakan(1984), Krishnaji(1979) and Herring (1986) and (1988b) also Frankel's study (1971), Ch. 5. I would also like to mention the interesting discussions on these matters with the late Mathew Kurian, 1985 02 07, and Govinda Pillai, 1985 02 08, who were both concerned about their party's policy—and then again with Pillai 1987 07 20 and 07 23 as well as with Thomas Issac 1987 07 21, Michael Tharakan 1987 07 20, John Kurian 1987 07 20, and Nalini Nayak 1987 07 21 when they could all, quite enthusiastically, report, some of them from within the party, about attempts at new policies, not least ideas about emphasising co-operatives.
88. See, e.g., Issac (1982).
89. See especially Raj & Tharakan (1984), pp. 83-87 and Krishnaji (1979). Cf also George (1986), p. 200, mentioning, for example, that within agriculture Kerala had, from 1975-76 to 1982-83 a negative growth rate of 0.39 per cent per annum for all crops.
90. Cf. Raj & Tharakan (1984), pp. 83-87.
91. Interview with Mathew Kurian 1985 02 07.
92. Interview with Rama Krishna 1985 02 05.
93. Interview 1985 02 04.
94. Interview 1985 03 12.
95. Interview 1985 03 14.
96. See Törnquist (1984), Ch. 17, esp. p. 196.
97. Ibid., Ch. 17.
98. Mitter (1977), pp. 62ff.
99. Ghose (1984), p. 118f.
100. Dasgupta (1987), Part I, p. 41.
101. For example, the CPI-M itself says, in "A reply..." (1984), that food production in 1977-78 was 9,000 000 tonnes and only 5,843,000 tonnes in 1982/83 but that this was due to an extremely unfavorable monsoon. (p. 6). However, in its "Reports..." (1985) the argument starts not with 1977/78 and the 9,000,000 tonnes but with 1976/77 and 7,450,000 tonnes and ends with, again, 9,000,000 tonnes—but this time in 1984/85 (pp. 46-47). Cf. also Dasgupta (1987) who also ends with the figure from 1984/85 when he talks about huge improvements. It is also uncertain as to whether productivity per acre has actually increased substantially, even when enthusiasts such as K. Ghosh (1986), p. 102 f. do their best to present the achievements. The same is true for investments, see ibid.. p. 107. The optimistic figures referred to by Dasgupta (last note) are also contradicted by stagnant figures on cropping intensity. (Dasgupta (1987), Part I, p. 41 and at least moderated in his review of some village studies, Part II, p. 51: improvement may not be there "in terms of yield in a particular season but at least in terms of greater intensity of cropping and production of more valuable crops". One should of course (have time enough to) break down these and other figures and look at various crops, regions, seasons etc. in order to get a good picture.

102. The figures given by the CPI-M are that the irrigated area has increased from 25 per cent in 1976/77 to 35 per cent in 1984/85. "Reports..."(1985), p. 46f. However, CPI-M's land reform expert Dasgupta(1987) has recently written, Part III, p. 6, that still only one-quarter of the total area is irrigated. There is no substantial increase in the area under canal irrigation, but the number of tubewells have gone up. As he writes in his Part I, p. 40, one should, however, also note that most of the shallow tubewells are privately owned and have become important income earning assets for the richer farmers. (Also, in his partly unbalanced attack against the CPI-M, the pro-CPI scholar Profulla Roy Choudhury (1984) maintains, on p. 184, that in 1977 2,200,000 hectares of land was under irrigation while the figure seven years later was only 2,300,000 hectares.)
103. Patnaik, U. (1986).
104. Boyce, (1987), p. 255.
105. Cf. Frankel, (1971), pp. 163ff. and Dutt (1981). According to a recent survey in Cooch Behar and Midnapore, for example, "not a single bargadar (sharecropper, O.T) of the study area is in a position to afford the cost of cultivation timely and adequately." Chattopadhyay & Chattopadhyay (1988), p. 8.
106. Cf. Sengupta (mss.), p. 3., for example, who argues that the problems of viability on small plots can never be solved before there are high growth rates in industry and other off-farm sectors, like in Japan.
107. "Reports...." (1985), p. 115.
108. Eg. Bandyopadhyay (1984), p. 44f. The survey: Chattopadhyay & Chattopadhyay (1988).
109. Interview with Nripen Bandyopadhyay 1985 02 22.
110. Cf. K. Ghosh, (1986), pp. 83f. and 116f.
111. Rudra (1984), pp. 268f and Khasnabis (1981), pp. A 45 ff. Cf. also Dasgupta; who is afraid that poor peasants may lose control of their land on the market if they do not get more support. Dasgupta (1987), Part II, p. 51.
112. Bandyopadhyay (1984), pp. 31f.
113. E.g. Ibid., pp. 56ff and Sen Gupta (1979) pp.101 ff. The CPI-M's Biplab Dasgupta, even rationalises this support by referring to the problems of unviability and, thus, the need to handle landlords carefully. Dasgupta (1984).
114. Ghose (1984), pp. 119f. Cf. also Dasgupta, Abhijit (1988).
115. Cf. Bandyopadhyaya (1984), p. 53.
116. Cf. ibid. and Dutt (1981).
117. For example, Bandyopadhyaya (1984) reports that only 5 per cent of the beneficiaries were covered by institutional credits in 1980. (p. 22) The CPI-M itself gives higher figures. But still, the best is about 300,000 beneficiaries out of at least 1,200,000 (1982). See "Significant Six years..." (1983) p. 44. Biplab Dasgupta (1984) maintains that credits etc. are the most difficult problems. In his recent manuscript (1987) he is even more worried and speaks about a decline. Part I, pp. 28ff. The former West Bengal Land Reform Commissioner D. Bandyopadhyay (interview 1985 03 16)

emphasised the class character of the Communist peasant movement as a basic cause for the problems -- and for the inability to rely on the actual producers, the real tillers, in order to promote production.

118. Dasgupta (1984). I also draw on interviews with Dasgupta (1985 03 05) and Ashim Das Gupta (85 03 04); the latter even claimed that wages had been increased, much land had been distributed etc. etc. and that "this cannot continue. For how long shall the 'rich' peasants pay? How shall we be able to keep peace with them?"
119. Westergaard (1986), p. 84.
120. Törnquist (1984), p. 129f.
121. See, e.g., Namboodiripad (1984).
122. For an illustration, see Frankel (1971), p. 155f.
123. According to Mathew Kurian, interview 85 02 07, this was one of the few things that Chief Minister Namboodiripad actually promised.
124. Unless they were not very influential in the area and could dominate the associations, such as in some cases in north Kerala.
125. Raj and Tharakan (1984), p. 46.
126. Cf. Nossiter (1982), pp. 169 and 247.
127. Christian initiatives among fishermen, for example. Interviews with John Kurien 1985 02 04, and 1987 07 20, and with Nalini Nayak 1985 02 08 and 1987 07 21.
128. Unfortunately I have not yet found time for reasonably detailed empirical studies. At this point I'm thus mainly drawing on discussions with M. Basavapunnaiah and Prakash Karat, New Delhi, 1988 11 13.
129. See *Frontline* (1987) for a good analysis.
130. *Peoples' Democracy* (1988).
131. Cf. Mitter (1977), pp. 48ff. See also the revealing statement by the main CPI-M peasant leader Konar in Sen Gupta (1979) pp. 74f.
132. Mukhopadhyay (1980), pp. VIf.
133. Sen Gupta (1979) p. 125.The CPI-M says that it contested 47,000 seats, CPI-M (1982), p. 168.
134. Sen Gupta (1979), pp. 118-134.
135. Reports...(1985), Part I, pp. 68ff and Part II, p. 145. Cf. Amit Roy (1983).
136. The usual label of the particularly north east Indian brand of Maoists who divorced the CPI-M in the late sixties and took up armed and often terrorist struggles.
137. Chaudhuri (1988) and (1988a).
138. See, for example, Mukhopadhyay (1980), Ch. 12, pp. vii-xvii, Dasgupta & Murty (1983?), pp. 9-14, and Sen Gupta (1979), pp. 134-139; Cf. also Significant Six Years...(1983) pp. 50ff.
139. Dasgupta(1987) Part I, p. 39 , Part II, pp. 46-52 and Part III, pp. 9f. I also draw on discussions with the author 88 11 16 and 17. Cf. Satyabrata Sen's way of putting it:
"The *panchayats* undermine the power of the landlords. Now people come instead to the *panchayats* to get advice etc." Interview 85 02 20.
140. Herring (1986), p. 32.
141. See at first hand Westergaard(1986). Cf. also Chattopadhyay et al. (1983a) on the predominance of parties as compared to mass organisations.
142. I am drawing on a discussion with Ashok Sen, 85 02 27. Cf. Myrdal (1968), pp. 1063f.
143. Cf. Dasgupta (1986), pp. 356.
144. For a recent report on this, see Dasgupta (1987), Part II, pp. 31ff, Part III, pp. 6-11.

145. I am particularly indebted to fruitful discussions with B. Chattopadhay on this point, for example 85 02 26. Also, N. Bandyopadhyay 85 02 22.
146. In this connection I am drawing on interviews with, among others, Satyabrata Sen, 85 02 20.
147. Eg. Westergaard (1986), pp. 90f, Rudra (1982) referring to an article by the then Finance Minister in West Bengal; I also draw on my own interview with Ashok Mitra, 85 03 05.
148. Quoted from Mukhopadhyay (1980), ch. 12, p. xviii.
149. CPI-M (1982), p. 173.
150. See, for example, Amit Roy (1983).
151. E.g. Westergaard (1986), pp. 79ff., Choudhury (1984), p. 161 (referring to a West Bengal government workshop), and K. Ghosh (1986), pp. 83f.
152. Cf. *Frontier* February 27, 1988; Leading members of the CPI-M seem to prefer to speak off record about this. Interviews in Calcutta, e.g. 85 03 05, and New Delhi 88 11 17. Cf. also Bose, P.K. (1984) , eg. pp. 213ff., for examples from the early seventies.
153. Biplab Dasgupta, interview 88.11.17.
154. Cf. interesting analyses such as Sen Gupta(1989), Hirway(1989), Ghosh(1989) and Chandrasekhar(1989).
155. For the following on Java, see Törnquist (1984), Ch. 17, pp. 194-201.
156. If the slogan "land to the tiller" had been strictly followed in Klaten for example, one of PKI's strongholds in Central Java, each family would have received a maximum of a few thousand square metres of land.
157. Discussions with CPI-activists in Calicut 1985 02 10.
158. Govinda Pillai, 1985 02 06, Mathew Kurian 1985 02 07, and, within the CPI, C.K. Chandrappan, 1985 02 09.
159. For the just concluded and the present paragraph, where nothing else is stated, see especially Herring (1983), Raj & Tharakan (1984), Kurian (1982), and, for the course of events, Nossiter (1982). I also draw on discussions with Michael Tharakan 1985 02 04.
160. Plantations were exempted from the land reform laws.
161. Herring (1979), p. 165.
162. For example in Kottayam and Allepey. Interview with Mathew Kurian 1985 02 07.
163. Cf. Herring (1986).
164. For the following data see especially Krishnaji (1979) and Herring (1983) pp. 180ff and 210ff.
165. Ibid., p. 211.
166. Interviews with Balaram, 1985 02 03, Nayanar 1985 02 04, Rama Krishna 1985 02 05, and information in interviews with Govinda Pillai 1985 02 06 and Mathew Kurian 1985 02 07.
167. See *People's Democracy* (1988).
168. Not only because they no longer co-operated with the Muslim League. See the analysis of the 1987 elections results in Frontline(1987). For CPI-M's own analysis of the 1988 local elections, see *People's Democracy* (1988).
169. See the field study report in Mitter (1977), Ch. 6., Cf. also Bose, P.K. (1984) on the developments in the early seventies in four villages in the Birbhum and Purulia districts.
170. Ibid., p. 66.
171. Interview 1985 02 28.
172. Interview referred to in Sen Gupta (1979), p. 75 and f. 66, p. 278.
173. Cf. Rudra (1981).
174. Dasgupta (1984).

175. Bandyopadhyay (1984), pp. 31f.
176. Expressed even by the former Land Reform Commissioner D. Bandyopadhyay, interview 1985 03 16, but also by CPI-M's main scholar cum Director of Land Reform policies Biplab Dasgupta (1984).
177. Cf, for example, Dutt (1981) and my previous sub-section on other roots of power and exploitation.
178. Dasgupta (1984).
179. Ghose (1984), pp. 119f. Cf. also Dasgupta, Abhijit (1988).
180. For this paragraph see, eg., Rudra (1981), (1984) and Rudra & Bardhan (1983), Bardhan(1984) especially Ch. 13 and 14, Dutt (1981), Chattopadhyay (1983), and Bandyopadhyay (1975) as well as Bandyopadhyay, A. (1981) among others. Cf. also Dasgupta (1987) who disputes some of Rudra's and Bardhan's results.
181. Interview 1988 11 17.
182. Most calculations about the concentration of land are made as contributions to discussions on the state of affairs within landlord-and/or-peasant-agriculture and more or less implicitly aim at some kind of "modernisation" based on private interests, scale and investment. The Communists followed suit, spoke about landless peasants, and thus excluded agricultural workers on so-called modern plantations. In the process of evaluation I will, therefore, do likewise.
183. See my discussion in the sub-sections above on "Other Roots of Power and Exploitation" and "Communist Patronage".
184. Mainly previously expropriated princely land.
185. For what has so far been said about Java, see Törnquist (1984a), pp. 192-194.
186. I will return to some of these findings—which disappeared in the mid sixties but have now been found and analysed—in the next chapter when discussing the way in which exploitation actually took place in rural Java.
187. Booth (1986), pp. 17f.
188. See Törnquist (1984), pp. 208f.
189. For a fine study, see Zacharias (1983).
190. Herring (1983), p. 184 and Bergman (1984), p. 46. For a recent full volume on the making of the rural workers in Kerala, see Kannan (1988).
191. For a recent calculation see George(1986), especially p.199.
192. Nossiter (1982), p. 58. This, however, does not indicate a high degree of industrialisation.
193. Bergman (1984), p. 46.
194. George (1986).
195. Krishnaji (1979).
196. Herring (1983), pp. 211-213. Cf. also Raj & Tharakan (1984) and Krishnaji (1979).
197. Herring (1983), pp. 203 and 213. On p. 178 Herring mentions the figure 115,000 acres from a rural survey in 1966—and Nossiter (1982) says on p. 293 that 86 per cent of these acres were in north Kerala, Malabar. Cf. also Krishnaji (1979).
198. See, for example, George's (1984) analysis of the "land-grab-movements" in Kuttanad, pp. 62ff.
199. Herring (1983), p. 213 on the hutment dwellers. Further analyses of problems of implementation on other pages in ibid.. and, for example, in Krishnaji (1979), Nossiter (1982), Raj & Tharakan (1984) and George (1984).
200. See, for example, Rastyannikov(1974) and Dasgupta(1984a) and (1984b).

201. (A) For this paragraph, see Bergman (1984), p. 132 and Ghose (1984), p. 92. Dasgupta (1987), Part I, p. 25b and Sengupta, Sunil (1981), pp. A-72f . Cf. also, e.g., Sen, Sunil (1982), pp. 207f. Bakshi (1987) and Bardhan (1982) (also in Bardhan (1984) Ch. 13).
202. Between 1951 and 1961 with 3.3 per cent, 1961-1971 with 2.7 per cent, and between 1971-1981 with 2.3 per cent. Bandyopadhyay (1984), p. 8.
203. Cf. Bakshi(1987).
204. See fn. above beginning with capital "A" plus: pp. 102f in Ghose (1984).
205. Cf. Sau (1979).
206. See for a recent argument Dasgupta (1987), Part I, pp. 26ff.
207. Interview with D. Bandyopadhyay 1985 03 16. and Ashok Rudra 1985 02 28. Cf. also Bandyopadhyay (1986) and Basu (1986).
208. For the paragraph up to this point, see Bandyopadhay (1984) pp. 13f. and 42, and Dasgupta (1987), Part I, pp. 25c ff. and Part III, p. 1.
209. Bandyopadhyay (1987), pp. 9f, Dasgupta (1984b), p. A-145 (in which it is mentioned that until 1982 150,000 plots have been registered) and Dasgupta (1987), Part I, p. 24c (in which the 1987 figure is said to be 300,000 registered plots).
210. Törnquist (1984), pp. 169f, and 196.
211. Hart (1986). Cf. Törnquist (1989a).
212. Quoted from Herring (1983), p. 169.
213. For the general course of events, see, Kannan (1988), Krishnaji (1979), Harriss (1983), Jose (1984), and Nossiter (1982). For an illustration see also George (1984), especially pp. 49-52, on workers' struggle in Kuttanad, (parts of Alleppey and Kottayam districts). There are also interesting notes from the case of Phalgat in Frankel (1971). For cases see also Kannan op.cit.
214. In addition to the general references in the n. above, George (1984) especially pp. 52-69.
215. Jose (1984), p. 58.
216. Herring (1986), p. 14.
217. See the sub-section above on "Unproductive Re-peasantisation".
218. See especially Harriss (1988a) including his case-study results from Phalgat.
219. Ibid..
220. George (1984), p. 90 and Herring (1986), p. 24.
221. Cf. Harriss (1988) p. 5.
222. Cf. Sydasien (1983) p. 26f.
223. Interviews with, among others, John Kurien 85 02 04 and Mathew Kurian 85 02 07.
224. Cf. Mohan & Raman (1988) and Lieten (1978), p. 518f.
225. Rudra (1981).
226. Dasgupta (1984b), and (1987) especially Part I, pp. 24c ff. and Part II, pp. 32-42.
227. Chattopadhyay (1983a), especially pp. 72-81.
228. See, for example, Bandyopadhyay (1986).
229. Rudra & Bardhan (1983) and Rudra (1987), Cf. also Rudra (1984), and (1985).
230. See last note However I am mainly relying on an interview with Nripen Bandyopadhyay 1985 02 22.
231. Kalyan Dutt, interview 1985 02 25.
232. Bhattacharya(1987), (1987a), (1987b), (1987c), 1987d), and (1988).

CHAPTER 2

BEYOND PEASANTS VERSUS LANDLORDS

THE PROBLEM

My preoccupation with the problems of the peasants versus landlords-approach should not prevent the reader from keeping in mind that these Communist-led struggles to implement land reforms were powerful movements and to a large extent reflected determined efforts of huge numbers of people to fight oppression and exploitation in favour of a more human order. There have sometimes been better results in terms of production and quantitatively measured standards of living in countries and areas where people have not even succeeded in slowing down the onslaught of capitalism in the rural areas. But dynamic capitalist forces were hardly present in Kerala, in Java and in West Bengal, and most people did not even have the option of becoming comparatively privileged slaves of the rich.

There is also the fact that the attempts at implementing closely related theses on the peasants' struggle against the landlords often resulted in similar problems in Kerala, in Java and in West Bengal. This should not prevent us from keeping in mind that there were huge differences in other respects. But if the policies as well as the outcomes are quite similar, we also have to look for the causes that they have in common, despite the obvious diversities.

Let me now, to begin with, summarise the problems of the peasants versus landlord approach.

The Communists maintained that monopoly of land was the main basis of power. But despite a fairly successful demonopolisation of the ownership of land in Kerala and West Bengal, and strong attempts at making an already comparatively unconcentrated structure of ownership (but hardly control) of land in Java more equal, other important bases of power were not undermined. These included many political and

administrative positions, communal loyalties, and the ability to manipulate markets and the supply of credits etc. They could be used in various ways: to repress militant popular struggles, evade laws, and to uphold as well as to create new vested interests in land.

Rent on the land was the decisive form of exploitation, the Communists said. But when landlordism was prohibited, as in Kerala, or regulated, as in West Bengal, petty landlordism developed in the latter state, while wage labour increased, and the appropriation of surplus outside production on the market and within local organs of the state developed in both cases.

There are few signs of the development of production which the Communists maintained would take place when land, or at least more security and lower rents, was given to the tenants by a progressive government. There was already a lack of industrialisation and effective demand on agricultural production did not increase. Those who could still command some resources often preferred to invest elsewhere, where the balance of forces were more favourable. And many of the actual producers, whose positions in relation to land and labour had improved, could not get access to many other necessary resources such as credits, water and other inputs, and sufficient influence on the market. Moreover, unviability and an extreme dependence upon patrons made it difficult for Javanese tillers to struggle for even basic land reform laws. And the problems of viability for the now formally independent operators in India made it difficult for them to resist new forms of oppression and exploitation.

Even if the argument was that political power mainly rested on the monopoly of land, the Communists also suggested that the actual producers would hardly be able to fight if they did not get political protection and support against the extra-economic means commanded by the landlords. But the Javanese Communists were domesticated by their reliance upon Sukarno's political patronage. Their comrades in Kerala fell (until recently) into the traps of various electoral alliances even with communal forces, in order to win political positions and the chance to support the peoples' struggle from the top-down. And in West Bengal, where the Communists did try to decentralise powers and democratise the *panchayats*, (local governments) the rationale was, apparently, to transfer most producers' dependence cum political loyalties from their landlords and other patrons to the Party people in control of state resources. Some malpractices developed. The *panchayats were* democratised, but organisation and democratic co-operation were not developed at the level where most of the producers had their

potential basis of strength—their capacity to work. Consequently, the majority of the people remained too weak to control and make use of the democratic rule of the political institutions and the resources that, therefore, others could regulate and begin to monopolise.

Further, the majority of the rural masses would, said the Communists, unite on the basis of a common hunger for land. But in Java there were not many large owners of land to fight against. Other interests within the peasantry became more important and caused divisions. If we exclude the early struggles against the comparatively large feudal-like landownership in north Kerala, the same problem soon occurred in the state as a whole and was further aggravated by the reforms which created new and more widespread vested interests in land and the surplus produced. In West Bengal the problem first appeared when an attempt was made at giving priority to the very poor and landless rather than the tenants—which then prevented any further emphasis on struggles for radical redistribution of land. The Communists in Kerala and West Bengal have since been busy trying to mediate between various conflicting interests in the rural areas. The anticipated main contradiction rarely showed up: thus providing another indication that the monopoly of land was not the only sole decisive problem.

The lack of land that could be redistributed was even worse if one excluded the land rented out to tenants and concentrated on what was left above the ceilings. Most of the so-called landless peasants did not and do not seem to have lost land. In some cases, there is even a decrease in the percentage of land concentrated by some few landowners, and more owners of marginal plots. The number of rural wage labourers increase, but hardly because of expropriation of land. Rather, the population has increased, there are more off-farm jobs, less tenants, more hired labour on even tiny plots etc. And the often indisputable concentration of *control* of land seems mainly to be due to ownership of or control over other necessary resources such as inputs and credits[1] rather than privately owned land.

Finally, the many workers who could not get land, but whose standard of living was meant to increase thanks to the presupposed developmental effects of land reforms, also suffered. As we know, the Indian Communists were eagerly trying to reconcile conflicting interests in the rural areas and could not forcefully side with the labourers only. Production rarely increased. Most peasants and strengthened tenants could not develop production as, besides land, they were lacking control of many decisive resources, while those who could

command these resources often preferred to expand outside agriculture, especially they could not control enough land. And the Communists defended peasants as well as labourers against a drastic onslaught of capitalism. The agricultural labourers were caught in this stalemate.

To wind up, one of the main problems seems to be thus: that some decisive tendencies of actual rural development had been difficult to take into proper consideration with the use of the Marxist theories which guided the Communists. It was not possible to effectively unite the peasantry as a whole against the private monopoly of land. The distribution of land and the abolishing (or regulation) of landlordism did not effectively undermine the established structure of power and possible exploitation. The actual producers' creativity, and their capacity to increase production and better their standard of living, was not sufficiently liberated.

There must have been additional roots of power and exploitation, additional contradictions, and additional factors hampering development of production. The importance of a lot of other necessary conditions of production besides private land—such as disciplined labour, water and other inputs, credits, free and equal access to markets etc.—were not realised. Many of these preconditions were regulated and controlled not only privately (individually and jointly) but also through various organs of the state on different levels. (And the possession of them could thus also lead to a de facto control of land; through dependency relations but also via the allocation of state or village property.) The control of these resources was often neglected by the Communists, and when they did pay some attention to them it was usually from a top-down perspective. Therefore the majority of the actual producers still did not possess the necessary means of production in order to generate development in their own interest.

CONCEPTUALISING THE PROBLEM

How can one conceptualise these decisive tendencies? Have they, to begin with, been approached in *the discussion on the so-called peasant question*?

In the late nineteenth century, European Marxists were surprised that capitalism had not spread from industry to agriculture, and one of their main concerns was with how to capture power in countries which still had large peasantries. Soon enough, however, this "peasant

question" became less explicitly political and more analytical. With respect to the capitalist countries,[2] why and how is it that agriculture develops differently from that of industry?[3]

Several paths of agrarian development have been distinguished on the basis of specific empirical cases. But our unforeseen and neglected necessary conditions of production have rarely been taken into consideration within these models.[4]

Marx's English path to agrarian capitalism is far from applicable as a model for the study of agrarian transition in Kerala, Java, and West Bengal. As we know, the peasants have not disappeared in a process of radical differentiation that creates capitalist farmers who employ agricultural labourers and pay capitalist ground-rent to encourage surviving big landlords.[5] (The British themselves failed to copy this by betting on their *zamindars* in eastern India within the framework of the Permanent Settlement.)

The other classical European way of displacing peasants in the process of the transition to capitalism was the Prussian path east of the Elbe. Utsa Patnaik finds extensive similarities with this project in India when she speaks about agrarian "development within a fundamentally unreformed hierarchical and exploitative structure, . . . a subversion of the personal, patriarchal relations of that structure in the interests of profit".[6] This may be true. But the Prussian Junkers—who, with extensive state support, subjugated most free peasants, finally turned them into bonded agricultural labourers, and transformed themselves into capitalists who managed their own estates—have hardly any counterparts in our cases of Kerala, Java, and West Bengal. And even if the importance of extra-economic forces in general and the state in particular are highlighted, the state was clearly based on especially big Junkers who are missing in our cases; and the state-interventions were more solid than in India and Indonesia.[7]

The so-called American model, which Lenin contrasted with the Prussian path, was and still is fought for by the Communists in India and Indonesia. But as we know, they have rarely succeeded. As opposed to North America, certain types of landlords are still very much in existence. And just as in the actual development of North America, there are very few free entrepreneurial peasants who have turned capitalist farmers and employed labour.[8] Moreover, the lack of possibilities to colonise new fertile land, which was possible in North America, as well as the non-existence of expanded markets, industrialisation, and low rates of population growth, which were present in most other success-stories of peasant-based developments (as

against the English large scale mechanised model for agriculture)[9], is only too obvious in Kerala, in Java, and in West Bengal.

Instead, Byres suggests similarities with the French path and the recent transformation of agriculture in north-west India "from below".[10] As in India, the French landlords did not pay much attention to management. Their properties were often fragmented and rented out to small peasants. Not even the celebrated anti-feudal French Revolution led to the rapid development of agrarian capitalism, at least not in the centre and in the south. The bourgeoisie was anxious not to confront the peasants, whose support was needed against the stubborn landed aristocracy—which was by no means totally eliminated by the revolution. And for a long period of time there was a shortage of alternative industrial employment for displaced peasants. Apart from the north, the small-peasant economy was indeed long-lived. However, we should not forget the substantial role played by the Indian state, among other factors which make a difference—not to mention the conditions of production, besides land, which caused so much trouble in Kerala and West Bengal as well as in Java.

The Latin American[11] absentee agricultural investment and management by urban financial and merchant capitalists who employ labourers is very rare in our cases. (I have excluded plantations from the discussion.) The so-called contract farming road, on the other hand, according to which agribusiness firms contract local farmers to produce a certain crop with specific and sometimes supplied technology at a specified price, is more interesting. Within this model the ownership of land by the operator is far from a sufficient precondition for independent dynamics. This method is, as a matter of fact, frequently used by international companies to get into Latin American countries with restrictions against ownership by foreign nationals, such as Mexico. The general idea is far from new in South and Southeast Asia. The Dutch, for example, "contracted" central and east Javanese peasants to grow sugar on their ricefields way back in the nineteenth century. But even if there is a renewed interest for this model, it is not predominant in any of our cases.

The Japanese path has frequently been put forward by mainly non-Marxists as a model for contemporary poor countries.[12] The landlords did not manage big estates like the Junkers but rented out many small plots of land. They—as well as many of their Asian counterparts—extracted much more surplus than the capitalist ground-rent of the English lords. But at the same time the landlords were rarely absent and took an active and close interest in the development of production (and

then used the surplus for productive investment within as well as outside the agricultural sphere). This is not only far from the English path but also from Kerala, West Bengal, and Java. And the final land reform which the Americans enforced after the Second World War, was a state product from above as well as from outside, rather than enforced from below.

Finally, the comparatively unsuccessful land reforms and non-solid state interventions in the cases of Kerala, Java, and West Bengal are very distant from the history of the present show cases of capitalist development, Taiwan and South Korea. When Japan was in desperate need of food, especially rice, in the early twentieth century, food production was enforced and developed on colonised Taiwan from the top-down, and along the very same lines of landlord-led tenant production with little wage labour as in the mother country. After the war, the Americans enforced a similar land reform in South Korea as had occurred in Japan—again from the top-down through the state. Nor was the Taiwanese land reform enforced from below by the peasants, but by the invading Kuomintang forces from within their own state. The capacity of the state in both countries to then replace the landlords, to promote development of production via inputs etc., *and* to continue the extensive appropriation of surplus from agriculture was in fact a necessary precondition for the rapid industrialisation of these so- called NIC-countries—industrialisations which the IMF and the World Bank now claim and market as a product of only the recent export orientation. But despite all these differences with our cases, the very possibility of being able to appropriate a lot of agricultural surplus through state control of inputs, markets etc. is a good indication that our decisive other conditions of production (besides that of private land) did and do play an important role in other cases as well.

Let me now turn from the macro models to at least *some attempts at rethinking the approaches in India and Indonesia.*[13]

In August 1984, a workshop was held in order to discuss results from one of the most ambitious research projects on peasant movements in India. In an opening statement, P.C. Joshi came quite close to my own tentative conclusions by stressing (according to a report by Harsh Sethi) "the increasing complexity of the rural scene and thus the need to move away from single issue perspectives to a new strategy, both for planners and for movements. How relevant was the slogan of 'land to the tiller', he wondered—a theme which was to recur with remarkable frequency. While stressing the continuing importance

of land and wages for movements and organisations, other issues related to 'the extraction of developmental resources from the state, of the management and control over common property resources (land, water, credit, forests, grazing grounds)' were, in his view, acquiring greater intensity today."[14] According to Sethi, the workshop-discussions ended with the quite gloomy perspective that the further growth of capitalism was inevitable "and in the specific context of the Indian reality (high pressure on land, layers of subinfeudation, a ravaged ecology, low development of non-farm opportunities, etc) there seems little chance of land struggles succeeding."[15]

Most of the contributions in another overwhelming research effort in the Indian context—the debate on classes and modes of production in agriculture—were also preoccupied with analyses of ownership of land, tenancy relations, forms of employment, and the other institutional forms of production relations that are possible to survey. It has since become obvious that, for example, "semi-feudal" institutional arrangements such as sharecropping were perfectly capable of being combined with capitalist expansion, while wage-labour arrangements by themselves are no guarantee that capitalism exists. Analyses of processes, dynamics, actually existing laws of motion(if any), and ways of appropriating surplus outside the very processes of production, were quite rare.[16] And when Ashok Mitra, on the outskirts of these discussions, pioneered studies of exploitation through the monopolisation of markets and unequal exchange, he did not concentrate on its relevance for the analysis of the appropriation of surplus, and of classes, on the level of production.[17]

One of the most interesting exceptions in relation to our search for a conceptualisation of conditions for production besides private land was Banaji's contribution on the capitalist domination of small peasants. He was opposing Utsa Patnaik and others who referred all kinds of profit on trade and interest on loans to the circulation process. And he wanted to show that Bhaduri's exciting argument,[18] that exploitation through usury was often decisive, did not necessarily imply some kind of stagnant feudal mode of production. Drawing on Marx's distinctions between different forms of subordination, Banaji maintains that "a monied capitalist (e.g. a merchant, moneylender) may dominate the small producer on a *capitalist* basis, he may, in other words extort surplus-value from him, without standing out as the 'immediate owner of the process of production'. In this case his domination will be based on control of *only portions* of the means of subsistence and production of the small producer. For example, he may advance to him his raw

materials or tools without exercising any specific control over, or pressure on, the small enterprise." Banaji talks about "pre-formal" subordination of labour to capital and about surplus-value in the form of "interest".[19]

Banaji's approach paves the way for more fruitful analyses of class. But the importance of the state when it comes to the control of the "means of subsistence and production" is still unconceptualised, among other things.

In my own attempt to hint at an alternative way of conceptualising the rural developments in Java until the mid-sixties, which the Indonesian Communist Party had failed to take into due consideration (and which I summarised in the first chapter above), I suggested that the obvious inequalities and exploitation in the PKI's strongholds were not, generally speaking, due mainly to the expropriation and concentration of land into private monopolies, whereafter rent was demanded from the actual tillers or surplus labour appropriated from agricultural workers. Rather, the rural masters—who usually had strong positions within local organs of the state, parties, other organisations (including religious ones) etc.—*also* managed to centralise huge parts of the surplus produced by formally independent but mostly unviable and thus extremely dependent full- or part-time peasants in return for necessary resources and protection. (Rural masters as well as peasants do, of course, also employ labourers.) I maintained that this was rooted in more or less Asiatic historical specificities, as well as in Dutch attempts to prevent the rise of native rural bourgeois interests on the one hand, and, on the other hand, their tendency to both strengthen and work through the traditional rural lords who mostly used control over formally common resources to enrich themselves. If one tries to enforce a traditional anti-feudal land reform under such conditions there will not be enough "surplus" land. Those who look forward to some land will compete and split off, while many unviable peasants will first of all look for patronage. And the land reform measures (aiming at the distribution of surplus land plus the lowering of rents on land) will not drastically undermine the basis of the rural lords, since their powers are also (and sometimes even mainly) rooted in control over decisive resources other than land. As we know, this was, unfortunately, precisely what happened.[20]

Quite recently, Gail Omvedt has headed in a similar direction when trying to formulate a historical materialist approach to caste, as well as to the contemporary farmers' protests against the state over prices in particular. Omvedt argues that Marx's general idea was to look

for the way in which "the owners of the conditions of production"—not only the "means of production" in a narrow sense—are able to pump out the unpaid surplus labour of the direct producers.[21] "A peasant may own his land and plough; an artisan may own his tools. But the peasant is not a real 'owner' when the 'conditions of production' include water, electricity, fertilizer, seeds that are controlled by capitalists and the state as well as land made fertile or infertile by drought-producing policies of the state and actions of big capitalists. Nor were the peasants and artisans real 'owners' in the medieval period when landlords, sardars, deshmukhs and rajas controlled state power and violence and thus the crucial conditions for production to take place."[22] I agree. But it is still a long way from these suggestions to reasonably coherent conceptualisations.[23]

Moreover, it is quite revealing that when Alice Thorner some years ago concluded her seminal review of the mode of production discourse, she not only called for better studies of the role of culture and caste: she also had good reasons to stress the lack of any detailed analysis of the role of the state.[24]

Interestingly enough, however, one of the scholars who started the debate, Ashok Rudra, finally came out of the controversy with the argument that there are no specific capitalist or feudal classes, that different forms of appropriation of surplus co-exist, and that we have to return to the study of class relations and talk about a hybrid rural class of exploiters.[25] And some years later the argument was put forward, with reference to not least Kerala and West Bengal, that the way in which surplus is appropriated is not as decisive for the development of production as the balance of power and its institutionalised forms, which determine the possibility to make progressive uses of the surplus. Ronald Herring mentioned, for example, the importance of the stalemated rural class conflicts in Kerala, with no class in possession of enough political and economic power to develop production.[26] Bardhan maintained that labour in West Bengal is not entirely bound in such a way that labourers would be better off if they could just take their means of production and leave.[27] But he, as well as Rudra, stress that various extra-economic powers are, on the other hand, still very decisive. Many villages are "self-contained". The markets are segmented. Wages, rents, interest on loans etc. are subject to complicated local patron-client-like relations of power which undermine the potential strength of collective class-based bargaining power.[28] And one can elaborate on the importance of control of water, and externally injected credits and inputs.[29] However, I fail to see how it is possible

to make any fruitful distinction between the appropriation of surplus, and the more decisive, often extra-economic powers cum balance of forces. The crux of the matter, in my—and, I think, in any political-economy view—is rather to conceptualise how the latter are also part of the ways in which exploitation and accumulation take place.

In a recent contribution in Java, Gillian Hart goes a bit further in an unusual and fresh attempt at trying to bring the state into the interpretation of detailed data on post-1965 rural and local transition.[30] Let me take a few examples. Contemporary research on recent transitions in rural Java frequently stresses various exclusionary labour arrangements (such as the so-called *kedokan*). It is not easy to understand them by arguing, for example, that they are a direct result of labour market conditions—they occur under tight as well as slack conditions. Also, these arrangements vary over time and between villages in such a way that explanations in terms of population growth or increasing commercialisation are inappropriate. However, according to Gillian Hart, they seem to vary with different relations of political and administrative power. As long as the rural poor, supported by the Communists, were able to organise themselves, exclusionary labour arrangements were held back and, for example, open harvests dominated. After 1965, on the contrary, the bargaining power of rural labour was drastically reduced and their masters could introduce arrangements that kept labour cheap and manageable by giving some villagers comparatively secure jobs and leaving others behind. This newly created social control in the villages was, of course, also essential for general political stability. In the same way Hart argues that the question as to whether labour is pushed or pulled out of agriculture can be solved if one realises that the reserve army pool essentially had a disciplinary function, that those who could retain their jobs within agriculture were more favourably treated for social and political reasons, and that this was made possible by the shifts in power relations after 1965.

Hart also proceeds to the question as to what extent recent rural change can be analysed in terms of the development of capitalism. She refutes most established explanations and brings forward an outright state approach. There are no rural capitalists, but rather state-sponsored clients. They can accumulate resources and wealth through preferential access to agricultural inputs, credits etc., as well as thanks to political and administrative powers. I will return to the substantial issues in Chapter Four. But the ways in which the state is used for explanatory purposes are already relevant at this stage. The analytical problem as I see it—and some years ago tried to argue in a preliminary evaluation of

some radical theories about contemporary agrarian transformation in Java[31]—is that state powers and resources do not come from heaven. It is true that a lot of the huge oil revenues, which the Indonesian rulers had access to after the late sixties and partly injected into agriculture, did come from outside and are not the result of the appropriation of the surplus that peasants produce. But most of the resources are not free and without charge for the rural producers.[32] And surplus is, of course, also appropriated within production as well as on the market. Unfortunately, the state approach, which Hart has imported in order to solve her puzzles, does not address exploitation and the roots of state power. If we are going to talk about state sponsored clients, for example, we need to know not only that they themselves benefit from state resources, and that they domesticate the poor, but also how they, presumably, use these assets and capacities in order to squeeze something extra out of the producers who need them. What decisive means of production are politically and administratively controlled in the villages and used for appropriating surplus from the clients of those who possess the state resources? And if a lot of the appropriation of surplus is carried out through the market (control of prices, etc.), how is this done and what are the resulting contradictions?

A proposition that partly addresses these problems was recently put forward in India under the heading of "a feudal reaction" and with reference to the general notion of corruption.[33] The idea was that there are now less possibilities for landlords to appropriate rent on land than before and that they have instead utilised control of administrative and political apparatuses in two ways. Firstly "in order to monopolise the deployment of state-controlled resources (credit, canal water, etc.)" and thereby to develop "landlord capitalism". Secondly, to control "the distribution of various inputs, not in order to monopolise their use, but to extract a share of the output of those (peasants and others) who deploy these resources in production".

In the second case the author talks about "bureaucratic feudalism". More and more peasants have to pay this rent ("around 25 per cent") because of their greater involvement in the market. But the "bureaucrats" can monopolise and extract rent only thanks to their capacity to employ extra-economic force; thus a feudal rent. And the rent "ends up not as accumulation, but as conspicuous consumption".

My main problem with this proposition is that it is too narrow. There are other monopolies under capitalism than those which are due to concentration and centralisation of capital—which are the only ones that the author approves of, so that he can label the rest feudal. Even if

we restrict ourselves to "bureaucrats"—which I do not think we should—rent does not have to be appropriated illegally and be equal to corruption. And the use of extra-economic force—to the extent that it is really necessary—may be very "feudal" but is frequently employed to develop capitalism as well. The paying of rent on monopolised resources might, on the other hand, be very much part of the so called landlord capitalism that the author sets aside. When is, for example, the use of rent- incomes to buy land or a car, or to distribute patronage, "conspicuous consumption" and when is it necessary investment in order to reproduce one's position?

An Alternative Supplementary Proposition

Even if much can be learnt from the approaches that I have briefly reviewed above, they are not sufficient when one wants to conceptualise the role and importance of the other necessary conditions of production which the Communists had not been able to take into proper consideration—such as water and other inputs, credits, free and equal access to markets. However, the theoretical proposition of rent capitalism and the state, which I arrived at in my previous report about the problems of conventional Marxism on capitalists and the state at the macro level in India and Indonesia,[34] might be fruitful to apply also in the present rural framework.

My studies of how a conventional Marxist understanding of capitalists and the state was employed politically suggested that the powers of the rulers of the state who could not be directly linked to "civil" classes had not been explained and given proper attention to. With regard to Indonesia, my research indicated that the decisive capitalists were neither liberated producers nor old powerful monopolists, but mainly a new type who had emerged from within state organisations and co-operated with private businessmen, domestic as well as foreign. In India, comparatively old-fashioned monopolists, and sometimes also liberated producers, were much more important. However, they did not dictate to the state and its important interventions, but rather relied on co-operation with politicians and bureaucrats with their own substantial resources beside those of pure servants. And in both countries the state interventions were not solid, but instead discretionary and arbitrary.

This should also be useful in the present report. The most important material basis of the new rulers that I distinguished on the macro level was precisely the monopolised regulation of and/or control

over those resources of the utmost importance in the rural setting: labour, water, other inputs, credits, markets and so on.

This type of necessary preconditions for production may also be privately (jointly or individually) regulated, controlled or owned. I will return to this. But let me start with the, in principle, public assets, and analyse in terms of rent the important material basis of the state rulers who cannot be directly linked to "civil" classes . They do co-operate with private capitalists. But in the former report *the following comparatively independent sources and forms of appropriation of rent were distinguished with reference to capitalists and the state on the macro level:*

	Sources	
Form of Appropriation	Public Administration	Public Resources
Plundering	self-aggrandisers	despoilers
Trading	regulative rentiers	political rent capitalists
Investing & sharing profits	regulative rentiers	political finance capitalists

To begin with, five notes of clarification:

Firstly, the identification of actors within the boxes does not imply that specific individuals and groups are engaged in one sort of "business" only. A particular bureaucrat, or officer, or politician may be partly "clean", partly self-aggrandising, partly despoiling, partly

appropriating rents by trading/investing favourable administration, and partly engaged in political rent or even political financing.

Secondly, neither does the identification of the above actors imply that I do not recognise the importance of various middlemen and brokers, including family members. These groups usually demand substantial parts of the rents.[35] But in this context I want to concentrate on the basis of those who are in actual control of administration and resources.

Thirdly, the appropriation of surplus may be legal as well as illegal. I am not only discussing theft and corruption. The rent may be in kind or in cash—including, of course, in the form of both wages and fringe-benefits, when he who pays the rent is in command of such resources.

Fourthly, I am not, in this table, taking into consideration what a certain individual does with the public goods that he has despoiled. Nor am I discussing what others do with the goods or licences for which they have paid rent in order to get access to. If I, for example, invest captured goods, this can often be analysed in the same way as the private businessman who invests his more or less legally accumulated capital. And the differential rent[36] which somebody should be able to gain thanks to preferential access to a licence or good inputs, for example,—and which he has first paid monopoly rent in order to get access to—is, at least at this stage, quite another matter. We should start by concentrating on the basic monopoly rent which is appropriated by those who in the first place administrate and/or control the decisive resources.

Fifthly, as I have already mentioned in the brief discussion on Gillian Hart's notions, I am setting aside the concept of rentier states. While it is true that a lot of the resources that the Indonesian rulers had access to after 1965 were not the result of the appropriation of peasants' surplus, most of them are not free and without charge for the public. The discussion about rentier states in the sense that huge parts of the state's income originate from rent on resources such as oil and foreign aid, which makes the state less dependent upon taxing people and on promoting production in order to increase revenues, is another, though important, matter. It is hardly the origin of the resources, but rather the monopolisation of them and their administration, that is basic—and thereby the possibility to add rents from trading or investing the favourable regulations etc., as well as real assets, to the initial resources. So, even when state incomes dry up (as the oil revenues in contemporary Indonesia) there is still the option for influential persons

within the state apparatus to demand rent from outsiders, who need "favourable" regulations and/or can give something in return for getting access to the remaining resources.

Let me now elaborate on the various boxes in the table:

Those who plunder the state through *self-aggrandising*—by, for example, bypassing others in the queue that they administer, or through the *despoiling* of public resources—are not in the focus of my argument. It is quite rare that somebody simply steals substantial quantities of important scarce resources. One usually invents a more legitimate indirect transaction—even when he who monopolises administration or resources is also the one who would like to use them; this is more common on the very local level than in the central organs of the state, and more common in Indonesia than in India with its many politicians and bureaucrats with no or little *individual* business interests. There are, however, at least two important exceptions. Many village officials in Java have long been legally allocated huge parts of the best formally common land, *tanah bengkok*.[37] Similar arrangements may also take place within religious and charitable institutions in both countries. (Previously, big landowners may even have donated land to such associations in order to evade the land reforms).

The regulative rentier, on the contrary, is he who commands the very process of public administration and hence is capable of demanding rent in exchange for "favourable" treatment. In the rural setting he may demand something in return for ensuring that a peasant gets preferential access to public inputs, credits, irrigation etc., or protection, assistance and recommendations, or that his son gets a job and so on. This does not—like most self-aggrandising or despoiling—have to be illegal and called corruption. One simply makes another "evaluation" of the facts and merits in the process of administering the queue. It can be done in cash or in kind (including the exchange of services), and quite often those who need the services are well placed within state organs and are thus able to pay rent in the form of wages or fringe-benefits to the "servant", or by empowering the latter's friend and so on. It may take place directly or indirectly, for example via relatives or other middlemen who also take a substantial share. Generally speaking, this appropriation of rent can take place either in a process of trading the favourable administration, or by other means, such as investing one's capacities in a partner's or relative's company or farm in return for a

share of the surplus. (Thereafter this "cashed" and privatised rent may in turn be invested in a capitalist way. But that is another matter.)

In the rural setting the regulative rentiers are those local politicians, bureaucrats and village leaders et al. who monopolise public administration. My evaluation of the Communists' experiences also suggests that many leaders and administrators within organisations such as decisive communal and co-operative associations have a similar possibility to appropriate rent.

However, even if in this case we can distinguish a distinct form of appropriation of rent, it does not follow that we can identify a new class with clear relations of ownership and control to the conditions of production. The actual foundations of the monopoly over various parts and of levels of state regulation and implementation which makes these rents possible, are very diverse, and hardly promote similar interests and ways of reproducing the positions.

The political rentiers and financiers in the table, on the other hand, are in control of the very real conditions of production that are formally publicly owned. In the rural setting it is thus not only those who control the administration of such resources as public irrigation who can demand rent in return for "good services". They themselves *or* other people within the state organs may also have managed to achieve an informal type of privatisation of the very water, pumps and channels. The person who handles the application for irrigation may be able to let you bypass others in the line, but you may also have to pay rent to the one who controls the actual water channels (or let the administrator do it for you). The same would hold true for many other formally public resources and services which are necessary conditions of production: credits, high-yielding seed varieties, fertilisers, pesticides, know-how, transportation, the disciplining of labour and access to markets to consider a few.

Many of these types of conditions of production are not public but instead communal, co-operative, and private, especially in India. And again, the form of appropriation may not be illegal. It may be direct or indirect and thus include middlemen. It may be in cash or in kind and thus include a wage.

Discussing capitalists and the state on the macro level, I also made a distinction between political rent capitalists and political finance capitalists.

Since he who simply trades formally publicly owned conditions of production in the rural framework may not be able to do so to capitalists, I will simply call him a political rentier. Of course he could

also be based in a communal organisation or a co-operative and trade their assets. His private colleague is a more "normal" capitalist who—besides the fact that he might also manage production—trades, for example, inputs, and/or rents out machinery, draught animals, transportation, marketing, harvest gangs, protection, credit and what not.

I am not talking about *political financiers* to indicate the presence of advanced monopoly capitalism. However, compared with a banker who lends out money to anyone who can pay interest, the political financiers go one step further and invest what they can offer the private partner, for which the financiers get a share of the profits from trade or production. Let us in the rural setting recall my previous citation of Banaji.[38] There is a kind of exchange that does not necessarily imply that we have left the level of production in favour of circulation: the subordination of the producer and the appropriation of parts of his surplus may take place on the basis of control of the necessary means of subsistence and production which are external to the processes of production.

The conditions of production that this kind of financier commands are frequently formally publicly owned, but they can also be communal, co-operative or private. For instance, it is most likely that many of the so-called capitalist landlords who are said to monopolise important public subsidies, are able to do so precisely because they are paying rent in the form of a share of the profit that they earn to bureaucrats or politicians. But in principle, the solid South Korean state or the transnational contractors in Mexico, who I discussed earlier, are also functioning as financiers in this sense of the term.

What is then the basis of this appropriation of rents? From one point of view it is, as I have already stressed, monopolised control over public administration and resources. And these monopolies, one could say, are due to extra-economic powers. From another point of view, however, the use of outright extra-economic force is not necessary. The basis is just as much the fact that many producers are in desperate need of administrative privileges and actual resources which they do not possess. There is no need of extra-economic force in order to prevent them from making use of the means of production which they actually possess—like the formally independent peasant who has to be extra-economically subjugated by the lord because he would otherwise escape.[39]

This is not to say that administrative and political power is unimportant for the appropriation of surplus. Any attempt at making a clear distinction between the appropriation of surplus, and the local balance and structure of power is thus, as I have already pointed out, quite misleading.[40] A lot of the administrative and political powers are based on specific forms of appropriating rents. And many other forms of extracting surplus within trade and production are dependent upon favourable regulations and access to public resources.

The appropriation of rent which I have discussed is therefore neither feudal nor capitalist in itself. It would be particularly dangerous to conceptualise it as "feudal". That could leave us with two illusions. Firstly, that all capitalists would be against this "feudal" habit, while the actual fact is that many of them are extremely dependent upon it. Secondly, that the administrative and political rulers are only based on extra-economic force, which the actual producers can be liberated from and will then be free to employ all the necessary means of production; while in reality the rulers also have firm roots within production, and most producers are separated from the essential conditions of production. I will have ample opportunities to discuss this in more detail in the next chapter on the idea of a rural revolution.

On the contrary, one has to discuss how the appropriation of rent takes place and how the balance of power between the various parties is involved in order to understand the dynamics.

Rent-seeking persons cannot, in the final analysis, exist without clients who need their services and can extract surplus from trade and production in order to pay. But does not the appropriation of rents hamper the development of production in general and capitalism in particular? Not necessarily. The rent-seekers have to see to it that their clients can pay. Those who appropriate rent by monopolising administration etc. may actually need to uphold inefficient regulations in order to survive. But persons who monopolise real assets which are necessary conditions for production may be just as interested in promoting the development of production as a banker. And he who gets his rent in the form of a share of the profit from specific business operations may have very good reasons to look after these ventures. This, however, may sometimes be most rationally done by what looks like an unproductive waste of money, but which *may* be, for example, a very necessary investment in the mobilisation of support, the building up of protection etc.

The way in which this protection of traders and producers is carried out is crucial. If the clients have the option to choose between

different holders of necessary conditions of production, the latter may have to improve their services.[41] But the extent to which it is possible to make improvements is due to various other influences, in terms of effective demand, increase of population, the prices on the world markets, and the possibility of mobilising international aid or drawing on oil revenues, for example.[42]

Also, and most importantly: the balance of powers between various rentiers, traders and producers may be such that many of those who possess some land do not get access to other necessary means of production, while those who command the other means employ them within trade and speculation where peasants and labourers have less bargaining power. This situation reminds us more of the stalemate in Kerala that Ronald Herring describes,[43] rather than of contemporary Java (to which I shall return in Chapter Four), with much more powerful political rentiers and financiers who co-operate with rural traders and farmers. The question of dynamics has thus to be answered empirically.

This way of addressing the problem brings us, finally, to approaches in terms of patron-client relations. As I stated in my previous report on the problems of a Marxist analysis of capitalists and the state, I do not want to deny the need to go beyond so-called economistic explanations. But in this case it is actually the material basis as a point of departure that is missing. I would maintain that patron-client relations in societies such as India and Indonesia are not mainly superstructural remnants without a firm economic basis, which could thus be undermined by conscientisation of the clients over the "real" conflicts of class. Rather, clientelism, including important elements of communalism, may often, in the final analysis, be explained as a combination of economic and extra-economic appropriation of rents.

Many of the necessary conditions of rural production and peoples' chances to survive are monopolised by persons within the organs of the state as well as within communal societies, co-operatives etc. Further, these resources are not mediated through open markets but are tightly linked to individuals. The "commodity" is personalised. Those who are in desperate need of the services and resources as well as those who command them have to uphold patron-client relations—as long as no better patrons or clients appear, or at least until one party can reproduce his position on his own, or through other forms of domination and exploitation.

I started this attempt at an alternative conceptualisation of the role and importance of other necessary conditions of production besides private land *by drawing a tableau which indicated different sources and forms of appropriating rent on the macro level and with reference to capitalists and the state. Let me now, in view of the discussion so far, try to adapt it to the rural transition that we have addressed.* The changes are few. I have explicitly mentioned other sources than public ones. (But when it comes to private resources I am, however, in order to simplify, only indicating the case of an individual owner and set aside his employees who may very well demand rent by offering favourable administration of, and access to, their master's property.) I have left it open as to whether or not the rentiers and financiers are also capitalists, since it depends on with whom they co-operate and under what circumstances.

Form of appropriation	*Sources* Public, communal, co-operative etc. administration	Public, communal, co-operative etc. resources	Private resources besides land
Plundering	self-aggrandisers	despoilers	(box closed because individual private ownership assumed)
Trading	regulative rentiers	political, communal co-operatives etc. rentiers	private rentiers
Investing & sharing profits	regulative rentiers	political, communal co-operative etc. financiers	private financiers

Taking this perspective as a point of departure, what can finally be said about the role and basis of the state in the actual rural transitions which I have studied so far?

Obviously we are not only far from the ideals of non-interventionism but also from the extensive and solid Prussian, Japanese, South Korean, and Taiwanese state actions. The Indonesian and Indian interventions certainly exist but are more discretionary and arbitrary. In my former report on capitalists and the the state I suggested the notion of semi-privatised interventionism—especially in order to indicate that the state did not act as a collective executive organ of the capitalists.

And the basis of the state, with particular reference to the rural areas? As far as I can see, one can exclude the English landlords and capitalist big tenant-farmers, the Prussian managing Junkers, the North American farmers, Latin American hacienda owners and agribusiness-contractors, East Asian production-oriented landlords with (or replaced by) solid state-intervention, as well as parasitic French landlords with comparatively little state intervention. The results from Chapter One above indicate instead that the rural basis of the Indian and the Indonesian state (at least in Kerala, in Java, and in West Bengal) lies with political, communal, and co-operative rentiers and financiers who link up with private capitalists, and comparatively well-off peasants.

Allow me finally to state, as a matter of precaution, that India and Indonesia are *not* the same. However, in both countries the Communists experienced the same sort of problems. I have therefore been highlighting some possible causes which they also have in common—despite the fact that the degree and importance of these factors also varies. Also, my alternative proposition should be seen as a supplement which covers factors that have been difficult to take into proper consideration with the conventional Marxist understanding. And while I claim to have shown that it is a necessary and fruitful proposition, its full validity must still be tested by way of applying it in concrete analysis, something which, despite some attempts on a general level in the following two chapters, is beyond the scope of this project.

WHAT'S NEXT?

How did the Communists react to the problems of the peasants versus landlords approach? Because of lack of time it is not possible to make detailed use of the theoretical proposition advanced above in order to

answer this question. But let me try the general perspective—and thereby also "test" if it makes sense.

The importance of the state in general and of its extra-economic force in particular was addressed in an increasingly aggressive way, and from a Maoist point of view, in the mid- and late-sixties, most explicitly by the Naxalites in West Bengal. Some of the then still surviving Communists in Indonesia developed a similar argument: the state had to be tackled more directly through a rural revolution. Their attempts failed. In the following chapter I will use the general perspective of the theoretical proposition above to analyse the problems of applying their Maoist-inspired approach.

From the late seventies and onwards, the state in India as well as Indonesia has become the main target of rural protests. This time, however, the focus is on, firstly, the appropriation of agrarian surplus from farmers through the market, and secondly, on threats against the possibility for the weaker rural masses to reproduce themselves. The character of these protests and the problems of different Communist ways of approaching them will be tackled in Chapter Four—again by use of the general perspective of the theoretical proposition put forward above.

NOTES

1. But also, of course, control of state or village land or land owned by, for example, religious institutions that are exempted from land reform laws.
2. There was also a peasant question in relation to the problems of building socialism in the so called backward countries.
3. Byres (1986), especially pp. 10-17.
4. I have to stick to the conventional models and cannot, because of lack of knowledge and time, write "...been of importance within the actual development of agriculture in these countries". I draw mainly on Byres'(1986) interesting attempt at relating various paths to agrarian transition in Asia.
5. For an interesting comparison between India and England related to rural labour, see Sau(1979).
6. Patnaik, U. (1986), p. 786.
7. See Chapter 5 in Törnquist (1989).
8. The North American reality tended to produce family farms which could survive thanks to substantial state-subsidies from the thirties and onwards — similar to those asked for by the contemporary Indian farmers whom I will turn to in Chapter Four.
9. According to Köll et al. (1988) the lack of these factors also explains the "the gloomy picture of the period of peasant-based development in Eastern Europe during the inter-war years". (p. 7).
10. Byres (1986), p. 78.
11. De Janvry (1981).

12. Cf. also Utsa Patnaik's attempts at a comparison with parts of India, (1986) p. 782f.
13. Hence, I do not profess completeness and hope that I am not demonstrating too much ignorance of exciting fresh research.
14. Sethi (1984), p. 1861.
15. Ibid p. 1863. I also rely on discussions with Sethi 1985 03 13.
16. For a collection of important interventions in the debate, see *Studies in...*(1979). For fine reviews, see Foster-Carter (1978), Harriss (1980), and Thorner (1982).
17. Mitra (1979); (first published 1977).
18. For a recent contribution, see Bhaduri (1983).
19. Banaji (1978), p. 356f. Cf. also Bernstein (1982) on the character of commodification.
20. These conclusions gave rise to some discussion. Ina Slamet, for example, has recently argued, in an exciting discussion about the strategies of the Indonesian peasant movement on the eve of its annihilation in 1965-1966, that almost all villages differed from each other and that the concentration of land was far from negligible in some less densely populated areas and in the neighbourhood of large cities, especially Bandung and Surabaya. Of course, there was some concentration of land *and* huge regional and local differences. I have only discussed a general tendency — when evaluating even more general land reform laws and strategies. And, I am not, like Slamet, prepared to include *bengkok* land (public land — often of good quality and constituting a considerable part of the total area — allocated to the village officials), land rented in and pawned land within the category of privately concentrated land, which by definition is struck at by anti-feudal land reforms. Further, even if I maintain that, generally speaking and in the final analysis, the main problem was not the concentration of land but its fragmentation, (that the many poor peasants have so little land that they become dependent upon the resources of the somewhat better-off), I do, of course, also mention that these better-off persons possess other resources, such as credits, access to markets, inputs etc., usually via the state, which the poor peasants are lacking and have to pay for — whereby their surplus is centralised. Moreover, I have never said that the PKI did not try to fight such other ways of appropriating surplus, (nor that its chairman, Aidit, did not want fair co-operatives in the future), only that the Communists between 1963 and 1965 concentrated upon trying to implement Sukarno's land reform laws (identification of surplus land plus less unfair rents on land) and sometimes even practised lower ceilings etc. Nor have I argued that the PKI did not know that there was not enough surplus land, but rather, on p. 201; Törnquist (1984), that they, despite this but for strategic (though short-sighted) political reasons, acted as if there was enough land. Finally, I have not argued that the Communists were eager to demonstrate concentration of land only because they wanted to conform to existing models for peasant revolution. Just like Slamet maintains, (and as I write about on pp. 201-202) it was also, among other reasons, because they wanted to refute ideas of egalitarian communalism.
21. I will return to a closer look at several of Omvedt's arguments put forward in relation to the so-called farmers movement in Chapter Four below.
22. Omvedt (1988), p. 9.
23. I should also mention that in relation to West Bengal, similar concern with the decisive role of other conditions of production has been advanced by, among others, Kaylan Dutt (1981), (Cf. Ghosh & Dutt (1977)), John

Harriss (1982), Barbara Harriss (1982), and partly Bose P.K. (1984). Cf. also Barbara Harriss essay (1984) on the "merchant state" in Tamil Nadu.

24. Thorner (1982), p. 2064.
25. Rudra (1978).
26. Herring (1984), p. 221.
27. Bardhan (1982), pp. 80ff.
28. See Rudra 1981b), (1984), (1987) and Rudra & Bardhan (1983).
29. Bardhan (1984). On water see also Boyce (1987), Chakravarty (1984), and Wade (1979).
30. Hart(1986). Those who have been interested in analysing the so-called green revolution — the socio-economic impact of new inputs and technology, the spread of commerce, rise of rural capital etc. — had to carry out not only surveys but also detailed local case studies. And the necessity to go beyond overall statistics by studying specific villages, reproduction of households etc. was and still is (for theoretical, methodological but also political reasons) difficult to combine with research on the role of the state. Nor have those who have concentrated on the state at the macro level been able to link their studies to the processes of change in the villages.
31. Törnquist (1984a). Cf. also my review of Hart's book, Törnquist (1989a).
32. If Hart is thinking on the (I think quite few) cases where actual stolen public resources are thereafter invested, she would not need to talk about state-sponsored clients as separate from "normal" capitalists, who also invest (more or less stolen) capital.
33. D.N (1987), pp. 2089-2091.
34. See Törnquist (1989), chapter 5.
35. Cf. Oldenburg (1987).
36. Differential rent is due to, for example, the fact that different land qualities result in different returns even when investments have been the same.
37. For an interesting recent study, see Zacharias(1983).
38. Banaji (1978), p. 356f.
39. Cf. Bardhan (1982), pp. 80ff.
40. Cf. my previous brief discussion in this chapter of Herring et al.'s discussion of power and productivity.
41. Cf. Brenner's (1986) argument that classes turn progressive only if they have to radically change systems and structures in order to reproduce their positions.
42. Cf. Arrighi and Piselli's (1987) argument that different relations of production, local balance of power etc. — the decisive variables according to Brenner — in various regions of southern Italy did not result in more or less successful development because of a common semi-peripheral position.
43. Herring (1984).

CHAPTER 3

RURAL REVOLUTION

INTRODUCTION

Having analysed the problems of the peasants versus landlord approach, I concluded the last chapter with an alternative theoretical proposition. Let me now, however, return to the reality of the late sixties and early seventies and to one of the then politically important ways of identifying and trying to solve weaknesses of previous peasants' struggles: a Maoist inspired analysis stressing semi-feudalism and the necessity of liberating the rural masses from extra-economic coercion before land reforms could be implemented.

The essence of this rural revolution approach was as follows: that previous attempts at enforcing the radical distribution of land to the real tillers had failed because the Communists had not given priority to revolutionary struggles against the state, but tried to work within the framework of a society where the anti-feudal bourgeois forces were not strong and consistent enough. On the contrary, semi-feudalism was still predominant in the rural areas, while a weak urban compradore-bureaucrat-capitalism was subordinated to imperialism. The crucial basis of the landlords' power was thus not at first hand their monopoly of private land, but their capacity to use extra-economic means to force the tillers to deliver rent in different forms to the lords, and thereby to prevent the peasants from escaping and living a better life with the means of production that they used. The actual rural producers had one thing in common: a hunger for the independent use of land that was now monopolised by the landlords. But a radical distribution of land, as well as consistent struggles against compradors and imperialists, presupposed that the tillers were first liberated from extra-economic repression by way of a rural revolution, by capturing state power. It was most likely that this had to be done through armed struggles. Village after village must be politically liberated before land reforms

could be implemented—and, finally, the cities surrounded and conquered.[1]

Several scholars have narrated and analysed the problems of Maoist-oriented Communists in India. My modest contribution will be to analyse *some* of the experiences in the late sixties and early seventies from the general point of view of the alternative theoretical proposition that I arrived at in the previous chapter.

In addition to features such as rent on private land, and the appropriation of surplus labour in direct relation to production, my proposition emphasised, to put it very briefly, the importance of the appropriation of surplus via rent on other more external conditions of production which are often controlled from within the state and separated from the processes of production.

Viewed thus, it could perhaps be possible to apply the Maoist-inspired approach in backward and isolated areas by linking up with communal loyalties and conflicts elsewhere. But generally speaking, the basis for the enemy's political power is, according to my previous results, not only private land plus the repressive organs of the state. The taking over of the local state machinery and land is therefore not likely to undermine the foundations of the immediate enemies, not to mention their counterparts in the cities, to such an extent that they cannot strike back. Neither are the tillers likely to follow the avant garde *en masse*, since most of them would still not be in full control of sufficient conditions of production. Nor is, finally, a broad anti-feudal front likely to appear. Other contradictions and conflicts than those against big owners of land are too important. And there are alternative ways of appropriating surplus labour besides that of drawing on outright political and military force.

Lack of time and insufficient information makes it impossible to even try a general "test" of this conceptualisation. But let us at least explore whether it is possible to fruitfully understand some problems of the rural revolution approach from the point of view of the just advanced scenario. I will concentrate on the late sixties and early seventies, when the Maoist inspired ideas were most consistently applied, and on the Naxalites in the case of West Bengal, which we already know a bit about. It should also be kept in mind that many of the new Bengal revolutionaries were not only inspired by Maoism but also by tribal peasants' ideas about, and struggle against, external enemies, and by the local middle class terrorist tradition as well as possibly by Latin

American ideas of rural and urban guerilla activism. But they were very much missing the European New Left—at least initially anti-authoritarian—ideas and actions, not only against the established bourgeois society but also vis-à-vis the Communist and particularly the Stalinist orthodoxy and prelacy.[2]

TO NAXALBARI

The reasons for the division of the Indian Communist Party in 1964 were many. Splits over domestic transitions and struggles had long been in evidence. The Sino-Soviet conflict in itself was hardly decisive, but it made a formal split ideologically and politically possible. Perhaps as important was a new revolutionary optimism. Militant anti-imperialism was on the agenda in many parts of the third world during the sixties, especially in China and Vietnam. And peasants were often seen as *the* driving social force—an honour rarely assigned to them in India. Indian Maoists joined the new CPI-M, which, however, was not a Maoist party. Some of its important leaders visited China and Vietnam in the early sixties and were much inspired. A revised agenda for the peasant movement stressed the need to base it on the interests of the poor and landless rather than on the somewhat better-off. But this was at least partly stated in order to ease tensions within the party. And no matter how inspired by Maoism many of the leaders may have been, most of them did not subscribe to the idea that there existed a revolutionary situation in India which they should respond to by initiating a rural based insurrection.[3]

The tensions within the CPI-M, particularly in West Bengal, soon became heated. In the spring of 1967 dissidents initiated a revolt in the North Bengal district of Darjeeling and the local setting of Naxalbari.

At this time the so-called green capitalist revolution had just started in parts of north India and the possibility of a red reaction was frequently discussed. The Naxalbari area, however, was far from capitalist, and neither did it fit easily into a Maoist model of rural semi-feudalism.[4]

There was a long tradition of peasant struggle in the area. For example, some of the leading Naxalites had their roots in the militant *Tebhaga* tenant movement of the late forties in the then undivided Bengal.[5] The main lesson from that time, according to the Naxalites, was not the problem of upholding an all-peasant line, and the fact that

even quite small landowners were attacked in the end, but rather the lack of armed resistance.[6]

The Naxalbari area[7] was not very densely populated. Most people belonged to tribes and scheduled castes. Many were sharecroppers under local landlords. Some of the landlords in the area did not try to bypass the land reform laws and were almost marginalised. But most of them tried and managed successfully to evade the regulations. Quite a number of tenants were evicted. In the end there was, as usual, very little surplus land left and a great deal of potential quarrel over it. Many tillers protested, and some lost their trust in the government and began to look for extraordinary powers.

Also, many people had come to work on the more than twenty tea plantations, and a lot of these were actually cultivating workers. They were allowed to grow crops on the huge parts of the plantations that were regularly left fallow. Plantations were excepted from the post-colonial land reforms. The workers therefore not only went on strike for better economic and social conditions, as in September 1966. They also demanded—though in vain—that the land they were allowed to cultivate for private use should not be classified as plantation land but should be subject to distribution.

Having lost by-elections to the West Bengal legislature in 1963 and 1966, the most well known Naxalbari leader Charu Mazumdar, then a member of the undivided CPI and CPI-M respectively, proposed armed revolutionary struggles.[8] Another local leader, Kanu Sanyal, was less powerful but more eager to base such actions on peasants' and workers' struggles for concrete demands.[9] The campaign for the 1967 state elections included militant work against the hoarding of foodgrains. Locally the Communists lost again, but a United Front government had entered the Writers Building in Calcutta. During April and May the dehoarding activities were stepped up—nobody should starve as long as there was food in many of the houses. Land which the militants claimed should be distributed was occupied.[10]

The CPI-M minister in charge of land reform questions, Harekrishna Konar, tried to settle the disputes and to channel them through legal organs under the new government. The local leaders, however, maintained that these institutions, as well as the laws, were the same as before, and that their struggles would still be described as unlawful. No agreement could be settled. Mazumdar spoke about the need to get rid of the landlords. The first policeman was killed at the end of May. Poorly organised but armed peasants and cultivating plantation

workers took over the villages, or at least the houses of the landlords.[11] Kanu Sanyal claims that the distribution of land was not given primary importance and that there were serious conflicts within the peasantry over land.[12]

FROM NAXALBARI

Towards the end of July, about a month after the CPI-M leaders had come out openly against the rebels, the Naxalbari uprising was crushed. Only less spectacular, often urban-led actions, continued in the area as a whole.[13] However, many of the leaders, including Charu Mazumdar, were still free and eager to continue.

Years of revolutionary propaganda and actions particularly in Calcutta, had led many Communists, especially the students, to believe that revolution was on the agenda. They were thus disappointed over the fact that the CPI-M settled for compromises within the parliamentary framework.[14] Peasant revolts were nothing new: particularly tribes had been fighting against the state for many years.[15] This was the time to extend and co-ordinate. Radio Peking gave the Naxalites full moral and political support (on June 28, 1967) and announced that this was only the beginning of the real Indian revolution.[16]

According to the rural revolution approach, which I briefly presented in the beginning of the chapter, there were three main reasons for this optimism. Firstly, the most important contradiction was between feudalism and the masses. The landlords would not be able to sustain their powers if they lost their capacity to use extra-economic force. Therefore, if only the revolutionaries were able to demonstrate that the villages could be politically liberated, the masses would follow suit and a popular insurrection would spread. Thus there would be no need to build well organised popular movements on the basis of concrete immediate demands etc. This was a revolutionary situation: all that had to be done was to light the fire. A rapid victory was frequently predicted.

Secondly, the basis of the state was weak and it would be quite possible to attack it. Domestically, the state was dependent on landlordism, but in the villages this state was not strong. The Naxalites almost personalised the state as a living entity, and recommended the annihilation of landlords and the holders of local state power. Just a few militants in an area would therefore be enough to get everything started. And if the state called upon support from outside, finally, perhaps, from

its ascribed external basis in the form of imperialists, it would be possible for the Naxalites to rely on nationalist sentiments just as the Chinese had done against Japan or as the Vietnamese did against the United States.

Thirdly, as soon as the Naxalites were able to show that the enemy was a "paper-tiger" and that a revolutionary situation was present, many Communists would leave the reformist and revisionist CPI-M.[17]

The dissidents within the CPI-M were quite strong and an extra all-India plenum was held in Burdwan—not in Calcutta, among all the extremists.[18] But despite the challenge in West Bengal, and also in other parts of the country, against the official Party line, the main threat was in Andhra Pradesh. Those in favour of a rural revolution approach were in the majority in eleven out of fourteen district committees under the leadership of Nagi Reddy.[19]

The revolutionaries in Andhra were more Maoist than the Naxalites under Mazumdar, but were never honoured with blessings from Peking. As opposed to Mazumdar, Reddy and his flock stressed the need to build a base among the poor before going ahead with annihilations and armed struggles. Reddy also wrote about India as being extremely dependent on imperialism and about a broad unity against imperialism besides the anti-feudal struggles.[20]

While communism in Andhra developed first in the coastlands, the Maoist ideas emerged later on and in the much more feudal old princely state of Telengana.[21] In the late forties, anti-feudal struggles were broadened within the framework of a liberation war against the *nizam* of Hyderabad, who refused to subordinate himself to the new independent government in New Delhi. When he finally did, the Communists were then confronted with harsh repression from New Delhi, and became increasingly isolated and divided on the issue as to whether they should continue the armed struggle or not. The problems of upholding a broad unity were piling up locally, and a new strategy in favour of peaceful and critical co-operation with a national bourgeoisie soon dominated at the central level. In the end it was mainly tribal peasants who fought in the forests.[22]

The dissidents of the mid- and late-sixties knew where they had their roots. Revolutionary activities and armed struggles developed again against semi-feudalism (Reddy preferred to say "in defence of it"), and with bases among scheduled castes and tribes.[23]

The tribal peasants' struggle in Srikakulam, north Andhra, had, however, a more recent background in militant resistance in the hills since the late fifties, and came close to the recommendations of the Naxalites in West Bengal in 1968. Mazumdar spoke about the "Yenan of India". Villages were cleared of officials and landlords by way of annihilating the worst and terrorising the rest. But attempts at spreading these activities failed. The Naxalites themselves reported conflicts between tribal people and people from the plains. Finally, the tribal people withdrew some support in the face of police repression which the rebels could not resist. They became more and more isolated. In the spring of 1970 the revolt was crushed.[24]

This was only about a year after the Naxalites had finally founded a new party, The Communist Party of India—Marxist-Leninist (CPI-ML) on Lenin's birthday, April 22. Most of the old CPI-M dissidents in Andhra, who had been in contact with the Naxalites within the framework of a co-ordination committee, refused to follow suit.[25] Here was a party which, despite new blessings from Peking,[26] did not include most of the Indian Maoists, perhaps did not even practice Maoism, and had a very tiny peasant base.

A new attempt was made in Midnapore,[27] in the tribal areas close to Orissa and Bihar. Poor and landless peasants had been radicalised during the first United Front Government, and staged militant struggles in favour of the redistribution of land and higher wages, and against blackmarketeering etc. In 1969, however, many local peasant leaders affiliated themselves with the Naxalites and new student leaders from Calcutta were recruited. According to one Naxalite report, the rebels should not become preoccupied with the occupation of land since that had caused problems in Naxalbari.[28] Instead, priority was given to the annihilation of the main enemies. Initially this was quite successful. Those who were not killed fled or surrendered. The power vacuum was filled by the Naxalites, who guided the seizing of landlords' crops during the harvest in a disciplined way, and without provoking even friendly rich peasants. Revolutionary committees laid down new laws in favour of peasants and rural labourers and began to enforce them. But even here the "piano-players" could be replaced. The Communists within the 1969 United Front government in Calcutta did not want to stage massive repressions but contained and isolated the activities. The Naxalites were missing safe areas to return to after executions and other actions were finished. Therefore, some local Naxalites suggested mass

movements and the buildning up of new Peasant Committees which could rule according to the interests of the poor and landless peasants and workers. This was not implemented. An attempt was made instead to break the isolation by expanding annihilations into neighbouring areas—which, however, did not open up for popular support and protection. And after the fall of the United Front Government in March 1970 it was fairly easy for the police to crush the revolt.

The last main rural battle in West Bengal during this period was fought in the district of Birbhum with tribal areas close to Bihar, and included some urban terrorism. In trying to understand what went wrong, Sumantra Banerjee writes, among other things, that even though the annihilations were accompanied by the expropriation of guns and more active participation by peasants in both guerrilla actions and land reforms than anywhere else, the villagers could not defend themselves when the military intervened in 1971. The party people and guerrillas had usually escaped to the hills and forests but were cut off from the peasantry in the plains.[29]

URBAN TERROR

The failures in the rural areas were supplemented in 1970 with Naxalite terrorism especially in Calcutta.[30] The basic idea seems to have been that there was both a need and a possibility to also attack the weak so-called urban comprador-bureaucrat-capitalism.

Radical terrorist-oriented activism had strong historical roots among the Bengali urban intellectuals. There was an acute crisis within the education system, accompanied by severe problems of underemployment for young intellectuals, as well as for many labourers, due to the stagnating West Bengal economy.

Until late 1969, Calcutta was hardly affected by the upheavals in some rural areas. Mazumdar had encouraged many radical students to join revolutionary peasants in the villages.[31] But many of them preferred an urban quite spontaneous mini-Cultural Revolution, against the remnants of colonialism, feudalism, and so on—including the very education system that they themselves were involved in.[32] Attacks against compromising nationalists and Communists were also included.

During the spring of 1970 this was accompanied by an urban annihilation campaign and attempts at snatching arms to build up an arsenal. The "morale of the fascist hoodlums"[33] must be crushed. It

should be demonstrated that the state machinery was a "paper tiger" and extremely repressive.

The actions were preferably carried out in a primitive way with simple and traditional weapons to show people that they themselves could get rid of their enemies. The frequent drastic cruelty was supposed to express the extent to which the class enemies were hated.[34] According to one estimate, about 139 killings of "class enemies" were carried out in Calcutta alone between March 1970 and June 1971,[35] besides other forms of terrorism. In addition to these, many others were also murdered—including Naxalites themselves. According to the police, almost 1,783 Naxalites were killed in Calcutta and its suburbs between March 1970 and August 1971. Unofficial sources claimed that the figure was at least double and did not include all those opened fire against by the police within at least six jails.[36] According to Biplab Dasgupta, the rate of murders sometimes reached a peak of sixty a week.[37]

The urban Naxalites did not aim at leading policemen. Rather it was subordinate personnel, even traffic constables, who were attacked—presumably because they carried out the repression and often harassed poor people.[38] Neither were the annihilations directed at big business or even against the centres of bourgeois depravity along Park Street, for example. It was instead quite small businessmen who were terrorised and sometimes assassinated, and this alienated the Naxalites from the middle classes.[39] The working class was neglected,[40] but what about the underemployed and marginalised? Did they follow suit instead? The Naxalites managed to "liberate" some areas, especially along the main railway line. But in order to uphold the power they had won, they had to partly depend on the local gangsters and petty criminals (wagon-breakers, for example). Previously these had often been the clients of Congress-I bosses, and were still sometimes used by the Naxalites' enemies.[41]

Many politicians, particularly CPI-M cadres, were also murdered. The killing of other politicians were often blamed on the CPI-M. Among other reasons, it was the aim of the Naxalites to undermine the possibility of holding new state elections in 1971 and at least to prevent the CPI-M from getting back into governmental power. It took some time before the CPI-M was capable of defending itself and its election campaign in most areas (and then, unfortunately, also to retaliate). The police hardly did their job. A little war between different Communists suited the Congress-I party, among others, and enabled the police—and people with good contacts within the police—to get rid of

their "enemies". But people in general were hardly comfortable when this ran wild and spilled over into something which looked more like a civil war, and eventually the CPI-M lost the 1971 elections.[42]

Finally, various parts of the "paper tiger" machinery of the state began to roar at the same time and in the same direction. A leading Congress-I youth leader (Narayan Kar), who had been quite friendly with the Naxalites, was murdered in mid-1971, precipitating a crisis which led to West Bengal being put under presidential rule. Congress-I-sponsored armed gangs took over many Naxalite areas, probably with the support of the police. Many were killed. Police raids and arrests followed. Other urban strongholds outside Calcutta seem to have fallen in a similar way.[43] Sometimes brutal and always demoralising infighting had already begun among the Naxalites.[44] Now they were on the run. Charu Mazumdar was arrested and died in July 1972. The Chinese support had already dried up by the end of 1970. The Naxalite attempts at an immediate revolution were over. The attempts since then toward finding renewed paths are another story.

POST-MORTEM

To what extent does thus the scenario advanced in the beginning of this chapter make sense? The brief review of the Naxalite experiences in West Bengal indicates, like many other studies, that it was possible to start applying the rural revolution approach in some remote areas with a quite unified tribal population who were oppressed and exploited from outside, as well as by traditional landlords using feudal-like methods, while it was very difficult to spread the movement to people within more developed and complicated social, economic and political structures on the plains.

This seems also to be valid for the experiments in Andhra and other parts of India. For example, very few Naxalites (only ultra leftists within a Leninist tradition) gained any ground in the very densely populated and commercially developed Kerala, which had neither nucleated villages nor solid landlordism, but did have a tradition of solidly peasant- and working class-based Communist leaders.[45]

The Maoist-oriented rural revolutionar es who have succeeded in breaking new grounds in recent years are usually found in the still feudal-like areas of Andhra and Bihar. On the plains they often link up with severely repressed scheduled castes, tribes, and other communal groups. And opposition from various domestic nationalities, often in

remote areas, against threatening intensified state "developmental" interventionism, has, at least for the time being, given revised versions of the rural revolution approach a new lease on life.[46]

Only initially were the enemies paralysed because of the Naxalites' attempts at taking over the local state and land by way of annihilations. It was quite easy for the police to penetrate so-called liberated areas and finally to restore the usual law and order, especially on the plains. At an early stage, many leaders complained about the lack of base areas where they could be safe, while the masses were extremely vulnerable as soon as the cadres had escaped after a mission. The existing socio-economic structures were rarely hit at. (The Chinese leaders even refused to reprint an article by Charu Mazumdar in their journals because it stated that the Naxalbari peasants "fought neither for land nor crops, but for political power".[47]) Many landlords began to co-operate, as did some semi-criminal leaders in "liberated" urban areas. Landlords' houses were taken over in Naxalbari but land and production was not reorganised.[48]

But was not, after all, the main problem, the simple fact that the repressive organs of the state were totally superior, and that the Naxalites did not emphasise the building up of well organised and armed guerrilla forces supplemented with work within the police and army? No, it was not. It was obviously long before the police and the army had intervened on a large scale that militant Naxalite actions against the local organs of the state and the worst landlords did not lead to popular uprisings. Initially there were exceptions, but mainly in the so-called backward areas and among tribes. People may not have been "politically conscious enough". But according to a simple materialist interpretation, most people did not have, and were not allotted, enough of the conditions of production to revolt. They could not defend themselves, while Naxalite "protection" mainly provoked even more repression. Most of them did not have land. Naxalites tried at best to control landlords' land and sometimes their crops, and to attack money-lending, hoarding etc. But the distribution of land and other means of production to the tillers was rare. These problems were also hinted at by the dissident Naxalite leaders, who already at an early stage had suggested that the building of mass organisations, peasant committees, the reorganisation of production and distribution etc. should be considered.[49] And Peking indicated that the mobilisation of people and the building of fronts should not wait until some cadres had grabbed political power. But these and other critical messages, which were

brought home by a CPI-ML delegation under Souren Bose at the end of 1970, were kept secret by the Mazumdar leadership.[50]

Not only did mass upheavals fail to come about, but a broad anti-feudal all-peasant unity also did not occur among those who took action after the Naxalite annihilations. Other contradictions and conflicts than those between landlords and the masses over the land and rent on it were too important, especially on the plains.[51] Conflicts among the peasants had been a disadvantage, and already contributed to the failure of the glorified *Tebhaga* and Telangana struggles. According to the Naxalite Bengal-Bihar-Orissa Border Regional Committee, trouble had started at Naxalbari with the occupation of land under the leadership of the local Peasants' Association.[52] This problem was general: who should get land and on what grounds? The Naxalites themselves were and still are divided. Should they side entirely with the poor and landless and thus also strike at rich and perhaps middle peasants? Is anyone who is against "the correct line", or who led or supported feudal-like methods of oppression, an enemy? When the Naxalites were active within more complex socio-economic settings on the plains they gave priority to the very poor and downtrodden people, often at the expense of alliances with the somewhat better-off. This was the case when Santosh Rana, one of the leaders of the second wave of CPI-ML factions, managed to win a seat in the 1977 West Bengal state election in his old Gopiballavpur (in Midnapore district) home area where he had staged revolts in 1969-1970.[53] One must also include the divisions among the very poor. The phenomenon of linking up with the existing dominant "anti-social" leaders in the "liberated" urban areas was an extraordinary case. But generally speaking, the Naxalite activists seem to have reached out to the very poor, through existing loyalties within subordinated castes, ethnic groups etc.

Finally, what about Java? In comparison with India, the post-colonial Communist movement in Indonesia was unified and no Maoist-inspired rural revolution approach was attempted. Directly after the destruction of the PKI in 1965-1966 however, factions of still surviving Communists in exile but also within the country, proclaimed the need to follow the teachings of Mao.[54] Very little is known about the actual course of events but, for example, an underground PKI was rebuilt in the remote and hilly South Blitar region of East Java.[55] Networks were established, some co-operatives were set up among militant peasants to improve their living, and attempts were made to build a liberation army. Young people were recruited from among those who had lost

their relatives during the holocaust. In early 1968, some landowners and Muslim leaders who had been responsible for mass murders were attacked and annihilated. This revealed the networks and opened them up not only to local anti-Communists, but also to a massive army attack which practically eliminated the underground Party. Many peasants were killed. Most village leaders were replaced by military men. Similar actions were also, for instance, taken in 1969 and some years later against surviving militant Communists in the Purwodadi area in north Central Java.

In fact, it was rather a "green revolution" through the state that was victorious in Java. I will discuss this as well as the resistance against it in the following chapter.

NOTES

1. (A) For more extensive analyses of the rural revolution approach see at first hand Banerjee (1984), especially pp. 26ff, 42ff, 74ff, and (1986), pp. 77ff plus Dasgupta (1975) especially pp. 40ff and Ch. 5.
2. Cf. Roy, A.K. (1978), Ch. 3 and 4 plus Ray, R. (1988) for a recent contribution.
3. E.g. Roy, A.K. (1975), pp. 22f, 47ff, 63f, and 80ff.
4. Stated also by Souren Bose, one of the foremost leaders, in interview 1985 03 03. Cf. also Balagopal (1986), p. 1404 on the lack of Naxalite actions in green revolution areas.
5. See especially Mukherji (1979) and (1987), and Ghatak (1983).
6. Banerjee (1984), pp. 18f.
7. For the following on the Naxalbari area, see Roy, A.K. (1975) pp. 50-62, Banerjee (1986a) pp. 571ff. and Mukherji (1979) and (1987). I also draw on an interview with Partha Mukherji, New Delhi, 1985 03 19.
8. Dasgupta (1975), p. 5 and Mukherji (1987), p. 1615.
9. Banerjee (1985), pp. 90ff and Mukherji (1987), p. 1615.
10. For these causes of events see, e.g. Dasgupta (1975), pp. 1-15 and Banerjee (1986a).
11. Ibid.
12. Banerjee (1985), p. 90. It is also, for example, mentioned in Mukherji (1979), p. 44 that the revolutionaries urged the peasants to, among other things, "seize the lands of the plantation workers who had purchased land from poor peasants".
13. For the struggle in Naxalbari after the police intervention, see Mukherji (1979), pp. 61ff.
14. Cf. Banerjee (1985), pp. 50ff.
15. See e.g. the two volumes on peasant struggle edited by Desai (1979) and (1986).
16. Banerjee (1985), p. 90. See also the editorial "Spring Thunder Breaks Over India" from the "*People's Daily*", July 5, 1967. Reproduced in Dasgupta (1975), pp. 241ff.
17. See the footnote above beginning with capital (A). I also draw on discussions with Souren Bose, Calcutta 1985 03 03, ("Yes, Muzumdar said that it was a puppet state, that it would fall directly, and, for example, that

if there were only three Naxalites in an area no power could resist them."), with Santosh Rana, Calcutta 1985 03 03, (O.T: "How did you actually analyse the state in the late sixties?" S.R"Well, I'm afraid there was not much of an analysis. We just saw, imagined, a revolutionary situation. If we just got it (the revolution, O.T.) started it would go on."), and with C.V. Subba Rao, Hyderabad 1985 02 15 (O.T: "How could they arrive at the conclusion that the state was very weak?" Rao: "They personalised the state. In the local setting 'he' was not so strong.").

18. Roy, A.K. (1975), p. 129.
19. Ram (1971), pp. 78ff.
20. See the writings of Ram (1969), (1971), for example pp. 142f., and (1973). See also Dasgupta (1975), pp. 151-156. For Reddy's analysis of India's dependency, see Reddy (1978).
21. Ram (1973), pp. 295ff.
22. For a brief analysis, see Sen, Sunil (1982), pp. 132-139. See also, for example, Ram (1973).
23. In addition to the writings of Ram, see Banerjee (1985), pp. 103ff and 115ff.
24. Sen, Sunil (1982)pp.221ff, Dasgupta (1975), pp. 46-52, and Banerjee (1985), Ch. 5 and pp. 157-161.
25. See e.g. Banerjee (1985), Ch. 5.
26. Radio Peking July 2, 1969. Ibid., p. 132.
27. On the Midnapore revolt, Sen, Sunil (1982), pp. 219ff, Dasgupta (1975), pp. 52ff, Duyker (1987), pp. 80-87, and Banerjee (1985), pp. 137-142 and 164f.
28. Roy, A.K. (1975), p. 204.
29. Banerjee (1985), pp. 220-229. Cf. also Sen, Sunil (1982), pp. 228ff and Duyker (1987), pp. 88-95.
30. When nothing else is specified, see Dasgupta (1975), Ch. 4 and pp. 218-224 (who may be somewhat biased in favour of the CPI-M) and Banerjee (1985) mainly Ch. 8 (who may be somewhat biased in favour of the Naxalites).
31. Banerjee (1985), p. 173.
32. But not against "those upper class expensive schools, those phony replicas of the British public school system, that adorned the fashionable lanes behind Park Street, Lower Circular Road or Theatre Road"Banerjee (1985), p. 208.
33. Citation of Mazumdar in Ibid., p. 182.
34. Dasgupta (1975), pp. 79ff.
35. Ibid. p. 83.
36. Banerjee (1985), pp. 206.
37. Dasgupta (1975), p. 109.
38. Banerjee (1985), pp. 182ff. and Dasgupta (1975), pp. 83ff.
39. Banerjee (1985), e.g. pp. 192 and 208, and Dasgupta (1975), pp. 87f.
40. Ibid., pp. 99f Banerjee (1985), pp. 210ff.
41. Dasgupta (1975), pp. 81f., 91-99 Cf. Banerjee (1985), pp. 195-198 and 207ff.
42. Dasgupta (1975), pp. 88ff and 103-111. Banerjee (1985), pp. 192-198.
43. Dasgupta (1975), pp. 91ff.
44. According to, for example, some "post-traditional Communists": "The red riot started. The toiling people were bewildered. In between small groups like us were equally horrified. The shock of seeing good activists, who had lived and fought the establishment for years, suddenly hating each other, conspiring and trying to murder each other is an experience that only by going through one can understand." *Who are the post-traditional Communists* (198?), p. 5.
45. Cf. Dasgupta (1975), p. 221 and Nossiter (1982), pp. 358ff.
46. See e.g. Banerjee (1985), pp. 289-315, *Report from the flaming fields of Bihar* (1986) as well as Banerjee's (1986b) review of it, Omvedt (1985), Bose (1985), and Balagopal (1986). See also for an interesting analysis of the role of caste and increasing importance of class in Naxalite influenced struggles in Patna District, Bihar, Chaudhry (1988). In trying to get a reasonable understanding of the more recent development, despite this being a sidetrack in the present project, I have also benefited very much from discussions with, among others, Sumantra Banerjee and Gautam Navlakha, New Delhi 1985 01 19, Banerjee in New Delhi 1985 01 29 and in Calcutta 1985.03.02, Navlakha in Delhi 1985 03 18, Debasis Bhattacharya, Calcutta 1985 02 23, Souren Bose in Calcutta 1985 03 03, Santosh Rana in Calcutta 1985.03.03, C.V. Subba Rao in Hyderabad 1985 02 15, Gail Omvedt in Bombay 1985 01 26 and Uppsala 1986 09 18-22, Partha Mukherji New Delhi 1985 03 19 and 1988 11 16?, Bipan Chandra New Delhi 1985 03 19, I.M. Sharma New Delhi 1985.03.17 and Manoranjan Mohanty New Delhi 1985 03 19 and Uppsala 1987 02 26-28 and 1988 02 9-11. I will also to some extent be able to return to these questions in the following chapter.
47. Banerjee (1985), p. 203.
48. Evaluation by Kany Sanyal according to Banerjee (1985), p. 90.
49. For the different views, see Banerjee (1985), e.g. pp. 90ff, 105, 128ff, 140ff, 161ff, and Dasgupta (1975) Ch. 6.
50. Banerjee (1985), pp.201-204.
51. To this could be added simple facts such as the somewhat better chance for poor people in the plains to get supplementary or different jobs, while people in the hills and within more feudal-like socio-economic structures "had to stay and fight", discussion with C.V. Subba Rao, Hyderabad, 1985 02 25, and the fact that in areas where rice cultivation has been intensified and where the peasants now grow several crops, the poor people are not as "free" for revolutionary activities as they used to be during slack seasons, discussion with Debasis Bhattacharya, Calcutta 1985 02 23.
52. Roy. A.K. (1975), p. 204.
53. Mukherji (1983).
54. Törnquist (1984), p. 234.
55. To my knowledge, very little is known about this revolt. For one brief review, see Utrecht (1975).

CHAPTER 4

FARMERS AND PAUPERS VERSUS THE STATE

INTRODUCTION

According to the supplementary theoretical proposition advanced in Chapter Two, the appropriation of surplus via rent on external conditions of production, which are often controlled from within the state, was emphasised in addition to the the rent on land and exploitation in direct relation to production.

If this is so, the main and potentially unifying contradiction which is about to develop in India and Indonesia should not, at first hand, be landlords versus tillers over land, or farmers versus their labourers over the distribution of surplus value, but rather between those who are able to demand a monopoly rent for letting out external conditions of production and the actual producers on various levels who are in desperate need of them. Demands for de-monopolisation and democratisation may become decisive. However, since many of the external conditions of production are controlled via formally public apparatuses, most opposition should, at least initially, be directed against the state in general and may include, for example, ideas about de-monopolisation via privatisation rather than democratisation.

Consequently, in this chapter I will start by studying whether my general propositions are supported by recent conflicts and demands in India and Indonesia. The section on "Developments" includes a review of new Communist lines in India. The present so-called farmers' movements as well as new social movements and so-called NGOs (Non Governmental Organisations) are also addressed. The actual importance of struggles for democratisation is considered finally.

In the second section, called "Comments on Debates", I turn to the two most exciting controversies in India and Indonesia over these developments. There are two main discourses. The first is about "State and Agrarian Transformation". The second addresses "State and Civil

Society" including the crisis of the top-down development project of the post-colonial state. Having identified the decisive arguments, my main aim is to study if it is possible to avoid some of the confusion that characterises these discussions *and* to further develop our understanding by a general application of the supplementary theoretical proposition as an additional analytical tool.

DEVELOPMENTS

New Communist Lines

During colonialism, Communist analyses stressed not only semi-feudal exploitation at the local level but also the extraction of surplus through imperialist control of markets and conditions of production outside the villages. After independence, the struggle against local remnants of landlordism became more and more important. The main theories and analyses which informed these actions have been examined in the former chapters.

In Indonesia, the Communists have been unable to reorganise themselves and establish new ideas after the catastrophe in the sixties. But in India, the two main Communist parties found it necessary, in the mid-seventies, to focus again on the exploitation of the peasantry from outside— often guided and supported by the post-colonial state— by way of control of the market and conditions of production other than private land.

In early 1975 the National Council of the CPI related this to the development of capitalism in general, and did not yet emphasise any negative role of the state; at this time the CPI was very close to Mrs Gandhi. Struggles against so-called semi-feudal practices were still very important but

> "at the same time, it must be frankly stated that these struggles are no longer adequate. With the curbing of feudal exploitation and grant of ownership rights to millions of peasants and growth of agricultural production, even the poor, marginal and middle peasants— who together constitute nearly 90 per cent of the owner-cultivators— have developed a special interest in increasing agricultural production, in securing a proper share in the supply of inputs and credit which are being grabbed by the remaining 10 per cent who are landlords and rich

> peasants, and for ensuring stable remunerative prices for their produce and fair reasonable prices for their articles of consumption which is denied to them due to the machinations of the same landlords often working in collusion with big traders and industrial monopolists notwithstanding their own contradictions." (Also,) "any tendency to regard these struggles as 'unimportant' or as 'only' in the interests of the landlords and rich peasants is incorrect and must be combated."(sic.)[1]

However, since many "semi-feudal landlords" were transformed into "capitalist landlords" agricultural workers' struggle against them should also be emphasised.[2]

One year later the CPI-M also moderated its former pre-occupation with radical struggles against landlordism as well as previous demands for more favourable prices to weak peasants only. Times had changed, said Harkishan Singh Surjeet, the Politburo member in charge of the peasant front. "Capitalist landlords" as well as rich peasants had emerged. He saw more surviving remnants of feudalism than the CPI but emphasised "the monetization of the entire agrarian economy": even poor peasants now produce for the market.[3] And

> "unlike in the pre-Independence days, 25 per cent of peasants— rich and middle peasants— are no longer moved any longer by the slogan of seizure of landlords' land and its distribution. At the other end the 70 per cent of landless and poor peasants are not conscious and organised enough to go into action for the seizure of landlords' lands".[4] "The slogan of complete abolition of landlordism and distribution of land to the landless and land-poor . . . is a slogan on which we cannot go into action today in most parts of the country."[5] (Instead) "issues of low agricultural prices, rural indebtedness, high interest rates, inadequacy of institutional finance, heavy taxation, shortage of inputs and storage facilities, and their dependence on moneylenders and big traders and monopolists for marketing and market manipulations— all these concern practically all sections of the peasantry. This development has now created a real possibility of building up a broad-based movement of the peasantry against landlords, moneylenders, big traders and monopolists and against an extortionist Government which serves their interests."[6] (Finally,)"we should not hesitate to join

> even the platforms of rich farmers, etc., to promote such united actions if the demands are correct."[7]

Over the years the state has become the main target: "Our fight against price-rise and inflation remains an important fight against the Government policy of fleecing the common man to the benefit of monopolists and big traders."[8]

This re-thinking was partly due to the early emergence of non-Communist farmers' protests in states like Punjab and Tamil Nadu where commercial capitalist-oriented agriculture was developing.[9]

> "No doubt, the landlords are bound to benefit more by the increase in the prices of agricultural commodities. But since they have the holding capacity, they in any case can get better prices. It is the middle and poor who suffer the most. Although they produce a smaller portion of the surplus, they are very much interested in a remunerative price. If we do not support them, they are carried away by the landlords and richer peasants. This happened in 1976 when in Punjab we were against the increase in support price of wheat."[10]

Similar arguments about the need to struggle for better prices— since otherwise moderately rich and middle peasants would "be captured by landlords"— are often mentioned by Communist leaders and intellectuals in relation to other non-Communist governed states.[11] There has been some dispute on this question within the party, and the Central Committee has had to "convince" certain State Committees, for example in Tamil Nadu, about the correctness of the new line.[12] But the general policy is still in use despite some recent attempts to once again emphasise the land reform issue, especially in backward areas like Bihar.[13]

On the other hand, one should not forget that the new Communist lines were also due to the outcome of the Communist-led peasant struggle against landlordism in West Bengal and Kerala. This was analysed in Chapter One and Two. Let me summarise the results which are of special importance for the present discussion: the anti-feudal land reforms gave rise to re-peasantisation. This in turn aggravated various conflicts within the enlarged but heterogeneous peasantry as a whole, as well as between peasants and agricultural labourers. Not only was the time over when almost everyone could be

mobilised against the British rulers and their collaborators, but so also was the period when most rural people were up against the remaining feudal-like landowners. In the seventies, Communist sympathisers could often be found among both stronger and weaker sections of the peasantry, having different interests in land, inputs, etc. And many of these also hired Communist labourers or, as in West Bengal, rented out land to Communist sharecroppers. The CPI as well as the CPI-M maintained that these different interests had to be reconciled, and a common battleground developed against the main national enemy— the State in general and the Congress-I-led government in Delhi in particular. Agricultural producers were in desperate need of credits and favourable inputs, and of low taxes and favourable prices, and this was even more so since they were now deprived of much of the previous exploitative support from their old patrons. Cash-crop production, even among marginal peasants, was particularly widespread in Kerala. The Communist-led state governments did not have sufficient supportive resources of their own. Powerful attempts at promoting agricultural growth by way of further structural change, co-operation etc. would have caused serious divisions within the broad rural front, while the Communists never gave priority to the development of production over struggles for political change. Demands for more union government support via the local governments were therefore necessary not only in order to defend marginal, small and medium peasants, and to enable them to pay decent wages to their labourers or to accept lower rents from share-croppers, but also in order to uphold unity within the broad rural front, and, finally, in order to link up with other forces which could challenge the rival government in New Delhi.

Even some surviving Naxalites have reformulated parts of their earlier ideas in similar directions. The Naxalites had previously argued that there was a need to concentrate on fighting the state because extra-economic powers were the main foundation of feudal exploitation. At present, however, some say that the state should be opposed because it is— in co-operation with capitalist landlords and with the full use of feudal-like methods— heading a capitalist onslaught against peasants and rural labourers. Vinod Mishra's group, the most influential in the current "flaming fields of Bihar", is stressing the agrarian labourers' struggle against their landlords and often also vis-`a-vis so-called *kulaks*. But in addition to this, Mishra himself points out that in some of the areas where the current struggle is expanding, agriculture is comparatively modern and commercial and "the incidence of big

landlordism is low", while the number of old and new smaller "landlords" has increased. The negative effects of "the crisis of the green revolution" for "large segments of the upper and middle peasants" must be taken up. There is also a need to struggle for the "easy availability of various inputs at cheaper rates".[14]

Santosh Rana, the leader of another Naxalite group in the north east, talks more directly about the need to fight the state and its leaders and functionaries on various levels because they have taken over much of the former landlords' cum traders' and moneylenders' role— that of deciding prices, credits and so on.[15] In this struggle there is room for the peasantry as a whole.[16]

Farmers' Movements

An even more spectacular recent example of the increasing role of the state, the control of markets and the role of other conditions of production than private land is the significance during the eighties of the non-Party-led farmers' movements, not for land reforms but for more favourable prices and government support. The general idea is that state and governments on various levels are biased in favour of urban and industrial development, at the expense of the rural population in general and agricultural producers in particular.[17]

Besides the early farmers' struggles for more favourable prices, particularly in Punjab, the perhaps first new non-political party-led farmers' movement emerged in the late sixties in Tamil Nadu, gained in importance during the seventies, and mainly focused on lower prices for electricity, which, for example, is badly needed to pump up water from deep wells. After some time the campaigns in Tamil Nadu lost momentum for reasons which I shall return to. But similar movements soon developed in neighbouring Karnataka, in Maharashtra, and more recently in Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh. Presently the most well known are Sharad Joshi's farmers' association *Shetkari Sanghatana* in the west and the Indian farmers' union *Bharatiya Kisan Union* led by Mahendra Singh Tikait in the north.

Despite some local specificities, the demands are remarkably similar: higher government support prices for agricultural products, more and easily available inputs at lower prices, including water for farming purposes, lower tariffs for electricity etc., lower taxes and more favourable credits and the writing off of old debts. While the established Communist parties have demanded increased state intervention and responsibility for the trading of agricultural products, the farmers'

movements—presumably not least the comparatively well-off farmers who often have supplementary stakes in rural trading and other off-farm business— seem to be less afraid of private traders than of politicians and government bureaucrats. Farmers are also demanding jobs for their children in the public sector,[18] and complain about the low priorities given by the government to rural schools, health, and the general rural infrastructure, as compared to huge projects in the cities and the comfortable life of the so-called urban middle classes. Such extravagances are proudly exaggerated by government-controlled television and used by private advertisers in other media to titillate the dreams of the rising "middle classes". The miserable situation of the many urban poor is rarely exposed. Off-farm businessmen face no ceilings like those on agricultural land, and seem to get generous government subsidies and protection.

Organisation and actions are more varied. The new farmers' movements generally stay outside established political parties as spotless action groups among the grassroots of the "civil society". When farmers in Tamil Nadu formed a new party, this contributed to their decline. Since these are not movements of the very poor there are no serious logistical problems in terms of transportation and food for the activists.

Sharad Joshi's farmers' association does not seem to emphasise tight organisation. Huge masses are nevertheless present and active when asked to be. Joshi has also been prepared to relate the farmers' association to other new social movements such as radical rural women groups. He himself is a well educated retired UN-official, whose actions are almost union-like. Weak points of the enemy are carefully selected and attacked. For example, since the farmers are in control of most of the production of onions, this was a perfect product to cease delivering until demands had been fulfilled. The same selective tactics characterise the blocking of main roads etc.

Mahendra Singh Tikait and his farmers' union in the north are quite different. Tikait is an outstanding clan leader within the dominating peasant *jat* caste. He can draw on traditional loyalties and organisations for the new purposes. Women are also active— but only in support of their men. His manifestations are less union-like and more characterised by massive demonstrations, like the spectacular "invasions" of farmers in New Delhi, and the three week "sit in" of about one hundred thousand peasants in the nearby rather small city of Meerut in early 1988. The direct effects of this may not be overwhelming, but publicity has been, and the politicians and

bureaucrats have definitely got the message. For example, the farmers were quite well rewarded in the union budget that was made official some weeks after Meerut.

The union government has not been as successful in handling the farmers' protests as was the charismatic late Chief Minister in Tamil Nadu, the former Robin Hood-like film star M.G. Ramachandran, who developed a populist policy in defence of the poor against well-off rural producers and instructed the police to whip the farmers instead of making them heroes by sending them to jail.[19] When Rajiv Gandhi tried to save his vote-banks in Haryana by exclusionary distribution of favourable credits, with "loan-fairs" on the spot, the farmers were instructed to accept the loans—but still to vote for anti-Congress parties, since they would write off the same loans if they came to power.[20] And the Congress-I's making of the rural sugar co-operatives in Maharashtra into a loyal Party bastion by way of providing patronage against its political enemies, has mainly promoted the growth of powerful leaders with their own vested interests in command of local finance (including lucrative sugar mills and liquor distilleries) and votes.[21]

There are different ways of analysing the rise and character of the farmers' movements. I shall discuss the most fruitful interpretations later, but the following features are obvious.

As we have seen, the land reforms in Kerala and West Bengal created comparatively more free peasants who were, however, in desperate need of favourable inputs, high prices for their own products, cheap labour and so on. In these areas the established Communist movement managed to incorporate most of their interests.

The farmers' movements originate instead in areas where government-sponsored green revolution-like modern and commercial agriculture has developed. Contrary to what was initially expected, these policies did not only benefit big landowners. One of the most important causes of the rise of the farmers' movements is precisely that the green revolution also reached out to many quite small holders of land, who were soon in desperate need of favourable inputs and good prices, just like in Kerala and West Bengal. An interesting feature is that these movements seem to be particularly strong in quite dry areas where successful agriculture has developed thanks to the government-sponsored construction of dams, canals, wells etc. It is also in these same areas that the recent droughts have further promoted farmers' demands upon the state.

Even a quite poor peasant who received access to water in these areas might overnight become comparatively well-off. But he also has to borrow money, pay for other inputs and produce for the market. Not only has his dependence on the external conditions of production radically increased: but the people who are in control of these conditions are also different. The state in general, and in particular people with key positions and/or contacts within its organs, have to a large extent replaced previously private patrons (including moneylenders) who were very exploitative, but quite often also dependent themselves upon the survival of their clients.

Up until the early or mid-seventies, times were extremely good for the new modern farmer. Government subsidies were generous and the terms of trade between industrial products and agriculture were still favourable. Then came the oil crisis. The price for most new agricultural inputs increased. Industry was well protected by the state (as were the ever increasing organs of the state itself and its employees), and much more successful than agriculture in compensating for its higher costs by increasing its own prices. Industry does not seem to have been sufficiently hard-pressed to increase productivity, produce more products and thereby keep prices down.

The farmers were less able to increase their prices as the green revolution had given rise to a relative surplus production of important grains. There were many poor people in urgent need of the "surplus food", but they could not pay for it. Not even governments in Europe, where the farmers are not as important in terms of votes, would dare to lower the food prices in favour of weak consumers by selling out the agricultural surplus on the domestic market. And it is rather difficult to make agriculture even more efficient and capable of producing cheap food, so that more people can afford to buy it. The chances to rationalise farming operation and to find off-farm employment are too bad.

One must therefore be careful not to over-emphasise the importance of only the terms of trade. A good deal of the crisis is also the result of each individual contemporary agricultural producer needing many more inputs than before. In addition, these new— but also the many "old"— inputs have to be bought on the market,[22] and thus the real costs have increased.[23] Moreover, industry has also been incapable of expanding in an efficient way, while the buying power of the majority of consumers has not been sufficiently increased. Despite the fact that many farmers are in a desperate situation, the crisis will therefore not be solved by more government subsidies:

Similar problems— but so far no farmers' movements— can be identified in Indonesia. The Suharto government has successfully enforced almost universal use of green revolution packages and has prescribed how and what crops are to be grown in Java. Most distribution of credits and inputs, as well as the buying of agricultural products, has been handled and/or regulated by the state on various levels. Substantial oil revenues made high government subsidies possible for a long period of time. Despite a very high degree of "leakage", between 30 and 50 per cent is often mentioned, some resources also reach the small producers.[24] Even more than in India, it was not only the big landholders who benefited.

In the mid-eighties, Indonesia[25] finally became self-sufficient in rice. But the oil revenues had been drying up for some years. And the ecological consequences of pesticide overuse began to appear. One consequence was that the devastating brown plant hopper had grown immune to pesticides. Also, some high-yielding rice varieties revealed a low resistance capability.

In the face of diminishing oil revenues, expensive over-production and ecological problems, the government decided to hold down support prices, to cut down on the use of pesticides, and to stimulate diversification.

Dow Chemical Pacific, for example, lost about 80 per cent of its business overnight and was not too happy. Bulog, the state food logistics agency, was only saved from bankruptcy by not having to pay for the continued over-production of rice. But domestic diversification might also imply that Bulog's profitable import and re-selling of scarce products such as soybeans will be lost.

Many farmers are now deeply in debt to state banks. In 1985 there were complaints about not receiving correct floor prices from Bulog. Real incomes were probably falling. Fertiliser subsidies have since been further cut. According to the Agriculture Minister, the government as well as the small holders would benefit from a cutting down of production. It would be cheaper for the government to compensate the farmers for their losses by increasing the floor prices, than to continue to pay for pesticides and for a lot of rice which nobody could buy.[26] The government would definitely be saving money. But farmers complained that they had to buy the more expensive inputs before they could sell their harvest. And they would have to pay higher wages to their labourers. The many small holders with tight marginals— about 75 % of the holdings in Java are under 0.5 hectares— are likely to be

the hardest hit. Also, many of the small holders and their families are dependent upon additional jobs, often outside agriculture. During the years of high oil revenues and rapid economic expansion there were a lot of off-farm jobs available, particularly within construction.[27] The slow-down of economic growth in Indonesia has radically changed this picture. On top of this there have been serious discussions about state-enforced co-operatives.[28]

Gillian Hart has recently argued that harsh policies like these, which will certainly produce problems and distress among the rural poor and weak producers, combined with government ideas of relying more on the market than on, for example, the supervised rural co-operatives where "the lion's share of the benefits are appropriated by the wealthy few who control the co-operatives",[29] might lead to rural discontent. "The immediate effect of such a move would be to deprive the rural élite of the benefits to which they have become accustomed, and which have probably played an important role in ensuring that they behave as loyal and docile clients of the state. . .. At the same time. . .they may become more vulnerable to hostility from within village society."[30] Serious opposition may in other words occur if the government on the one hand strikes out against many producers, and on the other hand cracks down on the supervisors by taking away their possibilities to benefit from subsidies, trade etc. via local organs of the state.

This is not an unlikely scenario. But firstly, the Indonesian rulers have previously demonstrated a remarkable capacity to anticipate very different interests— despite the lack of free organisations— and reconcile the different parties— perhaps because of the dissidents' lack of alternatives to form, for example, independent farmers' movements. Secondly, the drying up of oil revenues and state subsidies may not necessarily lead to the inability of the local state patrons to continue to enrich themselves through the state. Pure plunder will be less rewarding. But they should be able to compensate these losses by appropriating more rent from those who need the increasingly scarce resources, the credits, pesticides etc. The most likely outcome would then be harsher conflicts between the actual producers, hopefully including their labourers, and those who monopolise the scarce key conditions of production within central and local organs of the state. Struggles for de-monopolisation and democratic rule of the public apparatuses may occur.

So far, however, contemporary rural conflicts in Java seem to be mainly protests against the state or the state supported "development projects" which threaten the possibilities for people to even survive in their local setting. I will now turn to this kind of conflicts.

New Social Movements and NGOs

The growing importance of the state, and, generally speaking, contradictions arising over other means of production than those which are privately owned by persons who are directly related to the processes of production, is also indicated by the range of other new social movements than that of the farmers as well as more or less related non-governmental issue and action groups (NGOs).

The emergence of these movements and groups seems to be related to a partly conscious response to a crisis of the post-colonial projects of developing countries such as India and Indonesia, from above by way of a new and strong nation state. Economic growth is not always the main problem: there is also its extreme unevenness, the way in which it is enforced, the increasing marginalisation of huge sections of the population, the capturing of the in principle common resources and institutions by powerful persons both from within and outside these organs, and thus also increasing problems of political administration and rule.

The most serious conflicts in contemporary *India* are not between socially and politically formed classes, but occur as a result of tensions among and riots staged by the various communal movements. Tens of thousands of people have been killed during the eighties, more than in any of the wars that independent India has fought in. The complexity of these issues and my limited concrete knowledge prevents me, however, from a deeper analysis, other than stressing some interesting tendencies.

In the Indian framework, communalism usually signifies religious antagonism. Generally speaking however, the concept of communal ties and groups has wider implications.[31] One usually thinks of groups etc. based not on what people do or think but on the very bonds between people. One is more or less born into a group. With a more conventional definition, communal social movements would thus include not only those based on religion but also those based on caste and ethnicity. There is certainly nothing new in conflicts between Hindus and Muslims, scheduled and other castes, tribal and non-tribal populations etc. But the quantity and extension of the conflicts have

taken serious proportions, particularly during the seventies and eighties. And the content and character of the conflicts have changed.

To begin with, communalism is not due to the lack of modernisation, institutionalisation etc. Some of the most serious riots have taken place in and around well institutionalised capitalist growth-pools such as Bombay,[32] with its chauvinist *Shiv Sena* movement, and New Delhi, where, for example, many Sikhs were terrorised and killed in front of passive or even approving policemen, politicians and other officials after the assassination of Mrs Gandhi,[33] and of course in comparatively well developed Punjab. And when poor "backward" tribal populations are struggling for autonomy, such as in the recent demands for a *Jharkhand* (jungle) state made out of tribal homelands in West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh, they are very much up against a rapid modernisation which is taking place at their expense.

The communal problem has usually been explained by either an historical hangover from the British tendency to divide and rule, or by the competition for jobs, business concessions and other economic resources during the post-colonial modernisation which often took place by drawing on communal claims. These perspectives should not be rejected. Additional historical perspectives, such as those stressing particularist, political and other cultures, for example the tendency to identify and treat various communities as separate and to give them special privileges, quotas etc. instead of favouring universal equal rights, could also be advanced. But these and similar theories "do not answer the question as to why some regions are still free of communal tensions and why new regions having no objective historical reasons should have become vulnerable."[34]

In some cases, such as in Bihar or Orissa, it might instead be possible to analyse communalism in terms of struggles by scheduled castes against feudal upper and middle caste oppression and exploitation.[35] Economically people may be divided into classes, but the social and political reality is usually quite different. Feudal-like methods are often used in favour of commercial and quite capitalist-oriented agriculture. And most poor agricultural workers belong to scheduled castes.[36]

However, what seems to be in common in most recent cases of communal tensions is the presence of state authoritarianism in general and a state-enforced brutal capitalism in particular.[37] This tends to exclude huge masses of the people from the benefits of capitalist development. *Dalit* (scheduled caste) agricultural workers are bypassed. Tribal populations are deprived of their lands and forests. Semi and self-employed urban slum-dwellers are increasingly marginalised. And so on. But at the same time communal affiliations and rivalries are used by by politicians on various levels, as well as by various employers, in a kind of "gangster-protection" politics. Various communities are first directly or indirectly threatened, and then promised various favours and protection.[38] Communal structures and loyalties are employed for the distribution of patronage, benefits etc. Socio-economic interests along different communal lines are thus further developed and are very difficult for those directly involved, as well as for left parties and movements, to pass by.

Many of the broadly speaking communal social movements are thus new, in the sense that they are on the one hand activated against an onslaught of state-led capitalism, and on the other hand are sustained and further developed by those who benefit from the new transformation of society. The fact that Hindu communalism or upper and middle caste activism is often offensive does not make their victims even more defensive communalism or casteism an alternative. And tribal peoples' struggles against capitalist expansion do not make their old form of economic and social organisation progressive. Ideologically one can count everything from very radical *dalit* movements to the Marathi chauvinist *Shiv Sena* in Maharashtra. And the Hindu chauvinist BJP Party has recently supported the demands for a tribal Jharkhand state.[39] The established left is particularly lacking the communal movements' networks of neighbourhood organisations relating to the problems of everyday life which confront members and sympathisers.[40] Most Communists are offside, while many Naxalite groups try to hang on to, and of course radicalise, the opposition of scheduled caste and ethnic movements against oppression in general and the state in particular.[41]

The state enforced development of capitalism has also generated a whole set of more specific new issues and threats against huge masses of people, and it has rarely been possible to channel the people's responses through the traditional parties, organisations and movements, sometimes including communal ones.[42] Environmental problems, the subordination of women, human rights etc. are no longer issues for concerned bourgeois intellectuals only. Neither is the renewed interest for human rights within the Left restricted to those extreme organisations which are faced with severe repression and thus, for purely tactical reasons, feel forced to struggle in favour of some basic room to manoeuvre.[43]

When, for instance, the devastation of forestlands leads to general problems of finding water and finally to drought and/or serious floods,

this becomes a matter of life and death, especially for the weaker agrarian producers.[44] Even those who possess land are no longer in firm control of this most basic means of production: others are. The same is true when huge dams, like the recent ones along the river Narmada in central India, are constructed, mines are opened, or huge areas are exclusively reserved for advanced union government's space programmes—as happened recently in Orissa—and people are displaced. Social resistance movements on specific issues develop. Fair treatment and compensation as well as influence are demanded.[45]

Even women's domestic labour is increasingly affected by the onslaught of capitalism. Women are, for example, often responsible for the supply of water. If they cannot get enough water, they struggle against those who control it, together with their sisters— just like men may struggle together with their colleagues against those who control their workplace.[46] The complex interrelationship between production and reproduction is highlighted by many of the new women's movements— on top of the anti-feudal-like liberation struggle against extra-economic male oppression.[47]

The importance of human and political rights becomes more and more vital with the growing importance of authoritarian state interventions. This is not "only" a matter of being able to speak, and organise; or about one's right to be protected against communal terrorism and not against being arbitrarily put in jail. One must also develop ways of acting *against* evictions, the unfair distribution of water etc. And a struggle *for* concrete development alternatives, not only against threats etc., is actually emerging. It is interesting to see how the struggle of those who are threatened by the construction of a new dam, for example, may gradually develop from resistance to demands for financial compensation, then for new land and for land with access to the new irrigation system, and finally alternative more appropriate small scale irrigation.[48] Former enemies used to be locally situated and one could deal with them locally, for instance by occupying landlords' land. At present, new ways of confronting those who control the conditions of production and act through the less concretely and locally visible state must be developed.

A series of non-governmental action groups have emerged to fight for the services and goods which the contemporary state rejects for the majority of the population.[49] Many of these groups include intellectual middle class people, but are linked to and mainly dependent upon the dynamics of the new social movements. Some of these NGOs are in support of the on-going struggle, in areas such as human rights and

civil liberties organisations, research and documentation centres, women's organisations, action groups against deforestation and the construction of dams or opening of mines without fair compensation. Some support the possibility of people surviving through co-operative development, such as the fishing co-operatives in Kerala,[50] the promotion of popular health and education including the spread of rational scientific knowledge, (of which the People's Science Movement is the most important with 15-20,000 activists[51]), and the defence and development of peoples' culture etc.

Other new NGOs are more exclusively rooted in and dependent on the important additional process of marginalisation and/or alienation among many quite young middle class intellectuals, in relation to the development project of the post colonial nation state. These are often very much in favour of different and more liberal development, parallel with personal interests in having access to meaningful jobs, good places to live etc. They usually work on a project basis with funding from various private as well as state sources, domestic as well as foreign. They thus run serious risks of being co-opted and become dependent on their sponsors.

The role and character of the new social movements as well as the NGOs are subject to an intensive debate which I shall return to in a following sub-section.[52] It is worthwhile to try to distinguish them from what could be called "old" NGOs, such as the missionary and charity organisations which emerged from within the dominating classes in society, and aimed at supplementing the public services of their own state and helping the poor. Many of the new NGOs, on the other hand, are in a way also further developing the tradition from the earlier liberation struggle, with its emphasis on the support and promotion of progressive social movements— including those of the middle class as well as "national businessmen"— in favour of their autonomy and the struggle against the then colonial state. Scholarly analysts in favour of many of the new NGOs are eager to emphasise the need to rebuild and further develop people's autonomy within the civil society, in face of the crisis of this authoritarianised and brutalised nation state project, which enforces capitalist development and simultaneously depresses and exploits community and neighbourhood organisations.[53]

The new generation of issue- and action-oriented NGOs which emerged in *Indonesia*[54] during the seventies has a slightly different background. Under the new order, the old political organisations and mass

movements have been gradually prohibited. New ones are either carefully controlled or directly linked to the state. No non-governmental political organisations and movements are allowed at the village level. The villagers should be a "floating mass". This forced a new generation of frustrated and concerned young intellectuals, who had deserted technocratic views and positions to find alternative ways of reaching people. They had to go beyond most of the old, extremely authoritarian and centralised organisational structures, monopolised by more or less co-opted leaders. They had to form alternative and more informal organisations which addressed specific, formally speaking, a political development problems. Nothing else was really possible in face of the Indonesian state.

The dissidents aim at reaching the poor. They reject modernisation theories which give priority to economic growth, and argue instead that what matters is the process of development; that the poor themselves become engaged and have a say in their own attempts to raise their standard of living.

The activists could often refer, among other things, to established ideas about community development within reputed international aid and development agencies. These same ideas made it possible for the new NGOs to legitimate themselves as supplementary to state development programmes. Access to some foreign funding was also essential for possibilities of upholding an important degree of autonomy vis-á-vis the state.

But the NGOs which carry out rural activities can also draw on an old Indonesian tradition of community organisations despite the fact that this is also made use of by the state. At least some of these were further developed by the Communists during the fifties and early sixties and made somewhat less authoritarian and vertical, and instead more democratic and horizontal and class based. The new NGOs are, however, a new generational project. Old progressive nationalists and Communists are carefully controlled. Most of them are at least "politically dead" while a few are linked to and paralysed by invalid old doctrines. There are some remarkable exceptions; people who do not only continue the struggle for social justice but are also prepared to rethink former theses. They often try to find new roads together with the young progressives in various NGOs and networks.

It has also been possible for some NGOs to link up with certain rural Muslim dissidents at universities and within religious schools, *pesantrens*, just as during the anti-colonial struggle. Muslim organisations, with an economic base of their own, are the strongest

individual civil movement opposing the state. Among the new development minded Muslims, the question of religion and an Islamic state is less important than moral issues and social justice.[55] The West and the city are sinful, they destroy traditional values and threaten the small peasants and other petty producers. Locally oriented and self-reliant development is proposed and worked for. But the authoritarian structures are still very important in the villages and in the *pesantrens*. And devoted Muslim communities in general and religious scholars and students in particular are still somewhat isolated from other villagers.

Despite this, with the partial exception of legal aid groups, which almost by definition are approached by activists at the base level, most of the NGOs are hardly solidly linked to dynamic social movements but are formed from above. Many have rather authoritarian structures. And some tend, for example, to work in close contact with "friends" in the central state apparatuses "to get protection from the feudal state", be able to act as legitimate associations in relation to the immediately threatened regional and local authorities and thereby, finally, reach out to the common villagers. The risk of being co-opted is always there.[56]

The NGOs cover almost everything from health, environmental threats against the villagers, stimulation of production and the building of co-operatives to culture and legal aid. They are not important in quantitative terms. But they usually reach poor people. They educate and train and offer examples of what people can do on their own. And they begin to stand out as important non-communal civil alternatives. It was therefore quite natural that the government enforced a tighter state regulation of the NGOs, their aims, means, activities, funding and of course their members in the mid-eighties. It seems, however, as if the necessary adjustments within the NGOs have not seriously eroded their dynamics.

Tensions between communal groups have not been as serious in Indonesia as in India. The last serious explosion in the early eighties of the almost traditional anti-Chinese feeling could at least partly be explained as a popular frustration over close business relationships between officers cum bureaucrats cum politicians and some Chinese businessmen on various levels, who the former prefer to co-operate with since they are not only the best businessmen but also extremely dependent on political protection.

Muslim opposition is more decisive. There are no impor ant conflicts with other religious communities as in India— but vis-á-vis the state and government politics. In relation to the present rural

transformation it is particularly interesting to observe the recent and quite obvious link between Muslim opposition and conflicts over state led displacement of agricultural producers from their land in an old area for transmigrants from Java in central Lampung province on south Sumatra. The transmigrants had worked hard for many years to develop the area. Apperently they also included a number of ex-political prisoners, whose children have had difficulties in finding jobs. These tensions added to the conflicts over the land. The authorities now maintain that environmental problems have made reforestation necessary. Dissidents maintain that this is a partial excuse for allowing real estate speculators from Jakarta to take over, including a reforestation company owned by President Suharto's eldest daughter. Land had previously been taken over by, among others, a joint venture company owned by the army-led company Kosgoro and Japanese Mitsubishi. Local tillers demanded that even if reforestation was necessary they should at least be able to first harvest their coffee plants. This is the general background of the serious violent clash in early 1989 with army forces in which many people— some say around fifty, others perhaps one hundred— were killed, while many more were seriously wounded, terrorised and/or fled.[57]

Generally speaking, it is this type of rural conflict over land— not mainly vis-à-vis landlords or capitalist farmers but against the state and those who work through and with it— which has dominated the scene for at least some ten years.[58] In July 1979, the farmers association attached to the regime[59] listed 423 cases of land disputes. By August the press reported 593 cases. Many people went to local and regional authorities and military commanders to protest. But they soon found out that they had to bypass these local, regional, and provincial authorities, and go directly to the national parliament (to get publicity) and even to the commander of what was then called KOPKAMTIB (the Operational Command for the Restoration of Security and Order).[60] In April 1979, the latter claimed that 80 per cent of the 1,200 letters which he had received each month concerned land dispute problems. In some cases there were violent clashes, for example in Siria-ria in North Sumatra and in Jenggawah, Jember, East Java. The government was seriously worried and the land disputes became one of the major topics.

It is quite obvious that the main actor and target in the reported conflicts was the state. There were three major types of conflicts. First and most commonly, state-owned or supported estates expropriated or redistributed land earlier taken by or given to peasants. In other cases, peasants were "only" forced to grow "certain" products, or they opposed

their enforced inclusion into the so-called Nucleus Estates. In most of these cases it is propertied peasants who revolt against the state, because they are about to be subordinated, or even proletarianised.

Second and increasingly importantly, there were many cases where the state supported the expropriation or destruction of land for "development purposes". Land may be needed for the construction of roads, factories, parking areas, or new irrigation systems (including the building of dams so that large areas will be flooded). There are also examples of factory discharge poisoning paddy fields. Entire villages may be threatened. One famous case was the building of a tourist spot close to the Borobudor temple in Central Java. In cases like these, it is the propertied peasants who are most directly hurt— if they are not paid off. Thus they often take the lead in fighting the local organs of the state. The poor and landless often rally behind, since they run the risk of losing their jobs and do not even get the generally extremely low compensation promised to the landowners. But there are also many cases where poor squatters are directly affected.

Thirdly, there are some cases of protests against the introduction, unequal distribution and use of state subsidies to "modern" agricultural production and fishing. Even if some protests are accompanied by attempts at co-operation among the weak producers for an alternative development, these are essentially the protests of petty propertied producers' against the state-enforced capitalisation of agriculture, fishing etc.— not conflicts between labourers and semi-capitalists within the processes of production.

This characterisation of the rural conflicts during the late seventies and early eighties, mainly quoted from a provisional report of mine from 1984, holds true also for the more recent developments such as the already mentioned case of central Lampung. Let me also give a few additional examples: In the mid-eighties, peasants in South Banten, West Java, lost their livelihoods because their fruit trees and coffee bushes had been cut down to make way for a state-owned nucleus estate, with new palm-oil trees which the peasants were promised the care of. Nothing happened. "As a result, what was once a busy fruit-growing region, dispatching truckloads of fruit to market every day, has now been turned into a ghost-district, with peasants sitting around most of the time, waiting to hear whether they are going to get a share of the land now being cultivated by the nucleus estate. . . while. . . local village heads (*lurah)* have been enjoying a bonanza, constructing new homes and buying diesel colts, no doubt with the profits from pay-offs

to help the nucleus estate acquire the land they wanted."[61] In the district of Pandelang "more than 350 peasants are being told that they must sell off their rice-land (*sawah*) so that it can be turned over to the construction of shrimp ponds for a private company." They had been forced to do so by the local governments.[62] About half of the plantation land in West Java is currently poorly maintained. "Planters in Sukabumi not uncommonly use their concessions to acquire cheap bank credit."[63] Workers are extremely underpaid.[64] Many small farmers cultivate parcels of neglected plantation land in return for parts of their harvest. "More than 1,000 farmers and their families have lost their source of income in Sukabumi over the last two years through the reclaiming of their land by plantations."[65] Hundreds of families, some 2,500 people in the Badega area near Garut, have recently been evicted from land which they have worked since the forties so that a private company can establish a tea plantation.[66] Another source talks about the eviction of farmers in the area from land developed as a country club.[67] Labourers in Mojokerto have been prevented from collecting sand along the Brantas river by the local authorities.[68]

The state enforced acquisition of land struck at owner-occupiers and legal tenants, as well as against the most vulnerable squatters. It is very difficult for even those who have well-documented legal rights to resist and/or to get fair compensation. Reports about new conflicts continue to appear. But this is not only a rural phenomena. Real estate developers are very active in nearby urban areas, while various construction projects— perhaps the road along which poor people live in hovels are to be widened— affect urban communities. The whole process is open to abuse, appropriation of various more or less legal rents etc. "The press reports numerous cases of illegal financial transactions, intimidation, bureaucratic delays, official bungles and the victimisation of claimants, particularly at local government level."[69]

The most spectacular conflict during recent years was the remarkably brave resistance of several thousand peasants against eviction without reasonable compensation due to the construction of a huge, and to a large extent World Bank-financed, dam for irrigation purposes at Kedung Ombo in Central Java.[70] Large areas are now flooded. People in the area have not been opposing the dam as such, but have demanded fair treatment and compensation. With the ridiculously small sums offered in compensation by the authorities, there was no possibility whatsoever for the displaced people to buy new land of which they can survive. As an alternative, the authorities suggested transmigration on very unfavourable terms. Resisting peasants strongly

rejected this and instead demanded nearby arable land; not even land irrigated thanks to the new dam, much of which has already been bought by outsiders. Dissidents were offered a remote and unusable area which they rejected.

The methods used by regional and local authorities against the peasants included everything from outright physical violence and imprisonment to the falsification of information, documents and signatures, as well as the offering of bribes,[71] and, finally, accusing people of being Communists and providing them with identification cards in which it is indicated, with the sign "E.T", that they are former political prisoners— usually short for being more or less ex-Communists—and thus pariahs. It is true that the former Communist party was very strong around Boyolali where the contemporary resistance has been most active. But former Communists are so watched and that they can very rarely play a leading role.

Most local people had to give up during the many years of struggle, despite increasing support from legal aid organisations, students and finally even some sympathy from the Minister of Interior, General Rudini and even later from the main sponsor the World Bank. When the dam was completed and water began to flood the area in early 1989, thousands of villagers were still refusing to move from their land. Finally, certain concessions were made to those of the most brave resistants who insisted in demanding compensation in the form of arable land.[72]

Kedung Ombo is the largest but not the only huge dam project in Java. At least eight dams are on their way and most people are struggling for fair compensation and resist transmigration as an alternative.[73]

The more and more frequent and serious disputes between the state and peasants or tenants over land have become a potentially threatening national issue for the government. The resistance of the immediately affected local people often seems to develop into demands for human and political rights in general, and the democratisation of local governments in particular. Their questions are also concerned with the issues of the close co-operation of leading officials on all levels with more or less private business, as well as with struggles against transmigration, both by those who are forced to participate in it and by people on the outer islands who are negatively affected by the "development" and opening up for outsiders of their native lands.

Finally, students are once again becoming active, not only in favour of their own interests against arbitrary rule and the lack of academic freedom. Many of them have also adopted the cause of "little people" against "the violent and undemocratic government and big land developers". Open and straightforward petitioning, demonstrations and similar forms of protests have recently taken place. This kind of "middle class student activism" is no main threat as such. But in comparison with previous student radicalism, the recent protests are more soldily linked to local concrete problems and to the much more serious and threatening disputes over land.[74] Interestingly enough, the Government seems to be divided on the issue. As I have already hinted, the new Minister of Interior, General Rudini, and some other leading officers, were reluctant to use outright repression against peasants and students while others, including the Governor of Central Java and more indirectly President Suharto himself, defended harsh methods.[75]

The Struggle for Democratisation

Under what conditions and to what extent does the importance of contradictions over the unequal control and rule— within and through state apparatuses at different levels— of other necessary conditions of agricultural production than that of private land, make struggles for de-monopolisation by way of democratisation necessary for broad sections of the people, their movements, and their organisations?

This question is not only exciting and important but also a huge research task in itself. I plan to make a modest contribution to it in the next few years and can only add a few comments to the present report.

From what has already been said, it should be obvious that many of the new social movements and NGOs often find it necessary to give priority to struggles for basic social, economic, legal, and political autonomy (or rights) among the weaker parts of the population, which may be held as basic prerequisites for any kind of real democratic rule. Unfortunately, however, it is also rather common that many communal but also other movements, as well as NGOs, try to win concessions by looking for alternative superior patrons within the present set-up. (It is not unusual for weak peasants to be very upset over the fact that they are not only liberated from landlords but also from patronage.) Others rally behind demands for privatisation, often applauded by their financial donors, rather than support the democratisation of

monopolised common resources. And several of the movements and organisations themselves are hardly fully democratically governed.

What about the Communists? The PKI and CPI contributed to the crisis of democratic rule in the early sixties and seventies respectively. The CPI-M, on the other hand, was actively struggling in defence of liberal democratic rights during the emergency. But this was mainly in order to survive. "Democracy is necessary. We have to defend ourselves against liquidation," said one of their leaders in 1985.[76] Even more straightforward: "It was a short term tactics to support parliamentary democracy. We were weak and needed it. A non-hostile government during some years would then make it possible for us to expand. At present we have become prisoners within these tactics."[77] And when General Secretary E.M.S. was confronted with the question of why the Left Front Government in West Bengal had for many years been reluctant to democratise their rule of Calcutta he frankly admitted that "I have no answer".[78]

Under its own guidance, the CPI-M has, however, made a huge and admirable attempt to democratise local rural governments, the *panchayats*, in West Bengal. This was discussed in Chapter One. The main problem seems to be that democratisation has not been extended beyond the traditional political institutions to the sphere of production and the market. The Communists emphasised the struggle for political power, while immediate popular efforts to develop production would have to wait. The complicated and contradictory socio-economic basis of the Party and its broad peasant front made radical agrarian reforms difficult. Most tillers are therefore not socially and economically autonomous enough to prevent new forms of top-down approaches and patronage. For instance, petty landlords and sharecroppers are very much dependent on top-down mediation as well as the distribution of resources. This may help the CPI-M to sustain their electoral hegemony for quite some time. But contradictions over the politically controlled conditions of production may also give rise to demands for further democratisation— or privatisations. And if the union government had managed to implement its new *Panchayat* policy with extensive interventionism, local and state level communist patronage may partly have been outcompeted.

From Chapter One we also know that the agrarian reforms in Kerala were more radical. Tillers here were generally given more social and economic autonomy than those in West Bengal, and landlordism was uprooted. But this meant that there were no petty landlords and sharecroppers in need of Communist regulation as in West Bengal.

Rather, new farmers as well as strengthened rural workers could both act on their own— and cause serious divisions within the ideal broad front. The Communists were soon on the defensive, and trying to compromise. Both large and small farmers as well as agricultural workers were liberated from the feudal-like relations of production but were now, without an alternative Communist patron as in West Bengal, left in a commodified jungle where the essential resources besides private land were not for free. On the contrary they were more or less monopolised on the markets, in co-operative societies and in local organs of the state, often by way of communal cum political loyalties. In this framework, the Communists were in a weak position and had no option but to play the game, including tactical alliances with communal groups, and to abstain from the decentralisation of powers to levels where communalism, casteism etc. were even more decisive.

Meanwhile, production stagnated. Those with capital preferred more or less unproductive off-farm investments. Further distribution of land was no solution. Demands for higher wages, and better employment conditions had to be paid for. But the farmers were reluctant and the Communists were afraid of pressing them too hard. The Kerala state was penetrated by various vested interests, and the union government in New Delhi was not too friendly. There were increasing employment problems, and the electoral support of the Left was stagnating. Nobody, not even the Communists themselves, expected the Left to win the 1987 state elections. But they did— why?

It was not because the old political project which was based on de-monopolisation of private land, suddenly had become fruitful. The election results clearly indicate that the Communists made losses in many of their old strongholds in the north. On the contrary they gained new support in the centre and in the south; in urban and more commercialised areas where the problems of underemployment etc. are even worse.[79]

I suggest that the new gains of the Left Front to a substantial degree came about because it was able to attract new voters with a more or less conscious programme for democratisation.

To begin with the old but still vital General Secretary of the CPI-M and former Chief Minister in Kerala, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, supported a radical shift from short term tactical alliances with communal parties. This may have contributed to the party losses in some of its old strongholds where support from Muslims had been important. But it attracted other voters who were fed up with the way in which communal and caste loyalties had undermined the effective and

reasonably equal rule of common resources. (Unfortunately the Hindu-chauvinist camp also made some gains.)

During the election campaign, the Communists also realised that problems of standards of living and employment etc.— which became some of the main election issues— could not be handled with further struggles for a more radical distribution of the pie. There was instead a need for the development of production. This could not be done by the outright promotion of different existing capitalists, since they were rarely production-oriented but mainly speculative. State intervention was needed— *but this presupposed efficient administration and rule.* As a consequence, democratisation and the further development of the state on various levels, including the *panchayats*, as well as, for example, future development of co-operatives, was necessary. In this way democracy made sense for the Communists.[80]

Naturally it is easier to draw up such programmes than to carry them out. There have been new elections for the *panchayats*,[81] and existing co-operatives are about to be democratised. But this does not in itself generate capital, which is still lacking, and New Delhi was as usual reluctant to contribute, at least until the new central government under V.P. Singh took over. A lot of powerful vested interests are threatened at various levels and also within the Left itself. The most well organised movements are not found among the many new voters such as young people with employment problems in the urban areas, but rather among workers and peasants who are not prepared to give up their advanced special demands. And various communal groups are often just as capable of mobilising the electorate as the Left at the local and district levels.

The implementation process has therefore been slow. Recent attempt include exciting group farming projects, in cooperation with the Peoples' Science Movement. New legislation on local government and decentralisation is also in the pipeline.

Meanwhile the Left Front made heavy losses in the late 1989 national parliamentary elections. There may have been special reasons for this, including a more united opposition, unskilled management of issues related to public and private education, and more in Kerala than in other parts of India a general questioning of Communist policies due to the development in China and Eastern Europe. But widespread discontentment with what the Left Front Government had achieved so far is also most likely.

The Government has to deliver some goods, at least to the important new voters who gave the Front a chance.[82] But it is neither

in command of them, nor able to rely on massive support from various agrarian producers who need basic protection to the same extent as the Communists in West Bengal can.

Sustained democratisation in Kerala will, therefore, I suggest, have to be based not on top-down patronage but on the further development of social and economic spheres in order to make people more autonomous and less forced to seek patronage among the dominating classes, communal movements etc. This is what makes democratisation in Kerala so exciting and promising— but also difficult.

COMMENTS ON DEBATES

The development of new Communist lines, the farmers' movement, and the new social movements and NGOs has led to intensive debates in India and Indonesia. It would be presumptuous of me trying to participate in these debates side by side with scholars who have carried out detailed field studies and often have personal experience from the actual struggles. What I will do is instead to identify what in my view are the most important arguments and suggest some ways of further developing the discussions by making use of the preliminary and supplementary theoretical proposition.

There are two main discourses. One is on state and agrarian transformation. The debate in India is related to various ways of analysing the farmers' movement and thus has an explicit political character. Disputes about the roots and types of agrarian transformation in Java are more diverse due to different results of research by various scholars as well as technocratic considerations.

The other discourse is on the "state and civil society" and the crisis of the top-down development project of the post-colonial state. The Indian debate is very much related to different ways of understanding the character and role of new social movements and NGOs, including their relation to established parties and workers' and peasants' organisations. The issue at stake in Indonesia, where traditional opposition parties and movements are eliminated or domesticated, is rather how to survive, resist and undermine an extremely authoritarian state.

State and Agrarian Transformation

In India, the farmers' movement, their demands for better prices, and especially the established Communist parties' quite favourable position on these issues have been confronted with a series of interrelated argument. A reasonable point of departure for a brief review of the main elements is Ashok Mitra's argument from the mid-seventies about an alliance between monopoly capital and a "rural oligarchy", which Mitra sees as exploiting urban and rural labour respectively.[83] The surplus-producing farmers obtained favourable terms of trade, cheap inputs and were protected from radical land reforms in return for freedom for the monopolists to benefit from trade and licensing, as well as from financial policies. This extensive support to the farmers also prevented the development of sufficient industrial investment, which was taken as an important cause of India's general problem of development.

Those who continue to argue along the same line[84] say that if the farmers continue to suffer, the main reason is not the less favourable terms of trade since the seventies nor the lack of substantial government support, as the latter is actually increasing. The oil prices have increased. But the basic problem is, in the first case, the lack of investment and efficiency within the production of inputs for agriculture since the mid-sixties. This led to shortages of goods and thus inflation. Higher output prices on farm products only aggravated these problems since industry has to pay more for agricultural raw materials and higher wages to those who have to buy their food. Higher food prices also contribute to the relative overproduction. The poor cannot afford to buy more and are forced to cut down on basic consumption. (The available surplus is thus paid for and stored by the state. But the farm lobby is powerful enough to prevent the state from using the surplus to provide cheaper food for the poor, not even in return for productive public work, since this might lead to lower prices for the farmers.) Higher output prices for farmers and a stagnating market do not, therefore, contribute to a more efficient agricultural system which is able to produce more and cheaper. The supply of inputs must instead be increased by way of appropriate industrial investments. This will also result in an increasing demand for agricultural products which will make the farmer happier and will create more jobs for those who have to leave the more efficient agricultural sector.

And secondly, the other basic cause of the farmers' problems is the commodification of agriculture. The green revolution is the initial cause of how many of the now complaining farmers originally got ac-

cess to various inputs and could develop and prosper on their land. But the same revolution demands many more inputs—which can only be bought on the market. And many inputs which used to be available outside the market, or at least through quite stable communal or patron-client relations where the patron also had to ensure that his client survived, must now also be paid for on the market if the creditor is not to be displaced. The negative effects of commodification thus have less to do with the terms of trade than with the increasing real costs of production.

In addition to this, the main critique is simply that those who complain are rich farmers, *kulaks*. It is the *kulaks* who lead the farmers' protest movements. And the green revolution packages have only reached out to well-off rural producers. According to one estimate it is those with more than ten acres of land, about 18 per cent of the agrarian population, who produce 67 per cent of the agricultural products on the market.[85] Most of the others, particularly those with below two acres of land, are net purchasers. They— as well as the huge population of labourers— will thus be hurt by increasing output prices to farmers. And any government, including Left Front ministries, will certainly have to cut down on welfare or investment payments or increase taxes, which will mainly affect the poor, in order to pay for better prices.[86] The present struggle for remunerative prices is thus clearly in support of *kulaks* and is a way of bypassing the "contradiction between capital and labour" within the processes of production.

The established left is undoubtedly doing this for opportunistic reasons, the dissidents say. On the contrary, farmers should get reasonable prices but not by plundering the poor and receiving even more subsidies. These should, once again, be arrived at by firstly increasing the supply of inputs through the development of relevant industries, so that farmers can produce more and cheaper, and, secondly, by increasing industrial and consumer demand for farmers' products. In particular, consumer demand for food should be stimulated by counting on the poor and their capacity to work. Labour is the basic source of development, not profit.

The established left has put forward three types of arguments in response to this criticism.[87] Firstly a "commerce and state argument": "perfect" capitalist relations of production between farmers and agricultural labourers are not predominant within agriculture. The main conflict is thus not between capital and labour. Capitalism is instead expanding through the market and with the support of the state. This is

particularly devastating for the weak producers, but even the so-called rich peasants are threatened. These peasants have to be defended. Radical political economists may talk and write about the need to rely on production and the consumers. But given the present government and the balance of power on the market, most of the rural producers would be ruined if they did not unite and fight for so-called remunerative prices and cheaper inputs. What powerful classes and political constellations are interested in enforcing industrialisation based on the needs of agriculture? This must be enforced. But relying on industry today means, quite to the contrary, production for the privileged, often urban, middle and upper classes, and production for export in order to pay for the imported products that these classes demand. It may be the case that a few larger farmers produce about two-thirds of the agricultural products on the market. But very many small farmers produce the remaining third; and what they are able to sell is of vital importance to their possibilities of surviving, staying on their land and paying their labourers and debts. Everybody with reasons to oppose this policy, this development strategy in favour of the urban rich on the back of the agricultural producers, must unite. There are also other contradictions, including those between farmers and their workers. Workers' interests should be defended. But real improvements require new overall policies that make it possible for agriculture to develop.

According to a second "political argument", many of the critics are naive economists who do not understand what is and what is not politically possible. The farmers' movement is a reality. It is not a conspiracy. Farmers do have problems.[88] It is a fact that rich farmers have a broad following among many middle and small peasants. These poorer farmers are not just being manipulated. They are in desperate need of higher prices and cheaper inputs including credits, and their only bargaining power is based on their own production. They are net purchasers on the market. They would not mind lower prices in general. But their bargaining-power as consumers is nothing as compared to what they can get within a united producers' front. And it is definitely the case that the established left has to address the same issues as the farmers' movement in order not to lose members, sympathisers and votes.

There is also a need for a national perspective. Developments in various parts of India are quite uneven. But the overall perspective must be to fight against the "big capitalist-landlord state" and the then Congress-I government. The farmers' movement, despite all the negative aspects which can be disclosed, is a national movement which

penetrates deeply into Congress-I strongholds, where the Left is very weak and would like to reach out. The farmers' movement represents a powerful threat against the government.

Finally, there is the related "build on social force argument". The Communists maintain that they have to build on the existing level of consciousness and "take up and hang on to every issue that comes up".[89] Advanced demands for struggle for land or co-operatives would be sectarian. It is true that consumers, even poor workers, will have to pay for the so-called remunerative prices to the farmers. But then the workers will also have to struggle for their rights and their wages. This cannot be solved from above, it is a balance of power and class question. One has to build on the real social forces.

However, Communists do not struggle hard for the wages of rural labourers. The actual line is that their employers have to get remunerative prices first. Also, Communist leaders say that they are not in favour of rich farmers' demands but they do suggest government intervention against monopoly traders. The Communists must of course build on existing popular demands and peoples' level of consciousness. But there is no substantial answer to the question of why the Communists themselves suggest and expect interventions by a "big capitalist-landlord" state to be in favour of weak producers. (The present central government hardly represents a qualitative shift in this respect.) And while the CPI-M leader Harkishan Singh Surjeet, in charge of these issues, claimed that the most favoured wealthier farmers should be taxed, he had to admit that this had not yet been done even in the Left Front-run West Bengal.[90]

Gail Omvedt, previously a stalwart supporter of a workers versus *kulak* line, has recently, often together with Chetna Gala, presented a more exciting way of analysing and defending the farmers' movement. Capitalism is dominating agriculture but not most of the processes of production. "The numbers and percentage of landless agricultural labourers are not growing; agricultural labourers are not organising themselves as a class to fight the *kulaks*; the 'middle peasantry' is not vanishing— instead it is very much holding its own, and peasants even seem to be trying to organise themselves 'as a class'."[91]

When agricultural labourers come together it is mainly thanks to local community identities. This is also true for the Naxalite attempts at organising rural workers.[92] Agricultural labourers have not grown as a group since the early seventies, and at least half of them also have some land of their own. This "gives them some interest in what

happens to the productivity of the land, and whether they can sell the crops produced on it at a reasonable price".[93] Omvedt and Gala also note that, "a very large proportion of agricultural labourers work for medium and even sometimes poor peasants", and that the "rural rich probably get most of their income from non-agricultural sources, including shop-keeping, smuggling, contracting, having members in high-level service or government positions, various forms of corruption deriving from political influence."[94] Nor are labourers on the rise in large-scale factory production but in "the highly exploitative informal sector" in the cities.[95]

Also, land concentration— defined by Omvedt and Gala as "growing landlessness at one end of the scale, growing percentage of land in the hands of big farmers at the other end of the scale"— is not worsening. Instead the middle peasantry is increasing but has become very dependent on supplementary sources of income and on the market as this group still sells a lot of what they produce and buy many inputs.[96] Rural inequality is substantial. Some 10 per cent of the rural households hold about half of the land, and about 15 per cent of those dependent on land are landless. But, according to Omvedt and Gala, "the remaining 75 per cent of rural families, the poor and middle peasants (and some agricultural labourers) have 50 per cent of the land, and these landholdings give them a powerful interest in (a) remunerative prices, and (b) keeping their land productive, free from drought etc."[97]

Omvedt and Gala argue that the main exploitation of the middle peasantry takes place through the market via the terms of trade. This was so during colonialism. At present, the input as well as the output prices are not decided by "the invisible hand of the market" but rather, to a large extent, through the intervention of the post-colonial state. On the input side the rapidly increasing credits from institutional sources are very important.[98] Omvedt and Gala conclude that "if we look at exploitation in terms of the production, appropriation and channelling of surplus labour, then it is correct to say that toiling peasants are exploited not by landlords but by urban capitalists. Capitalists benefit directly through cheap raw materials, and indirectly because cheap food for workers subsidises the wages paid to employees." And the agricultural labourers are exploited indirectly by urban capitalists, since a good deal of their surplus labour is appropriated not by their employers but by those who buy from the farmers.[99]

Theoretically Omvedt and Gala defend this analysis of appropriation and exploitation by referring to Marx and by claiming that the "production and extraction of surplus-labour" is basic.

"Control/ownership of the conditions of production" is only deciding how appropriation of surplus labour is taking place.[100]

Even when one turns to the most serious responses to Omvedt's and Gala's way of "rethinking Marxism" by reputed scholars such as Ashok Rudra,[101] the bulk of their arguments do not take our understanding much further but rather demonstrate how one can effectively polemise by employing different levels of abstractions, different concepts, and, of course, by misreading the other party's arguments. Omvedt and Gala ask, for example, why it is that so many poor and middle people follow Sharad Joshi? Are they being cheated? Or are there perhaps real "objective" interests behind their support which the Left have been incapable of understanding? But Rudra is only interested in disclosing that Omvedt and Gala are not even capable of understanding that "numbers mean nothing". Millions of people, he points out, followed Mrs Gandhi and Hitler as well.[102]

A second example is when Omvedt and Gala maintained that the farmers' movement in Maharashtra is not only a *kulak* business since the leader Sharad Joshi also accepts radical and independent women's organisations. This is then refuted by the argument that "gender is something that cuts vertically across all classes, and oppression of women by men is something quite independent of class exploitation".[103] However, the interesting point was rather that new forms of appropriation of surplus and oppression are developing, and that some of these forms have given rise to popular organisation among women both because they are particularly affected by the new exploitation and because the question of gender is at work.

My last example is when Rudra repeats the fact that most of the rural producers are net purchasers on the market and thus would be hurt by so-called remunerative prices.[104] But not even CPI-M's Surjeet Singh and certainly not independent radical scholars like Omvedt and Gala have rejected this on a theoretical level. They are simply saying that weak producers in particular must have better prices in order to survive, as long as they are not first offered cheaper food at the market or at least good alternative jobs in other sectors. A dual price system, with better prices only for the poor producers, which Rudra suggests, is of course unacceptable to people who maintain that the differences between rich and poor producers are not the most important ones. But even if we forget about this, Rudra's alternative dualism is simply not valid as a politically reliable alternative. Millions of poor producers prefer instead the actually existing farmers' movements.

Some arguments are more fruitful. Let me begin with the definition of the "middle peasant". Rudra supports the conclusion that "there has not taken place any sharp polarisation between a small group of landowners concentrating all land under their ownership and a vast majority of totally landless labourers".[105] But he maintains that the middle peasants are not on the increase if the definition is "those who neither hire in nor hire out labour".[106]

This is of course true. The point is that Omvedt and Gala employ another definition, worked out mainly by Djurfeldt and Lindberg et al., based on how surplus is distributed among different families and their capacity to reproduce their positions.[107] It is unfruitful to carry out a class analysis only based on the ownership or even control of land, and/or on the hiring in and out of labour, when commodification is developing and when most households have very many and diverse sources of income. Lenin already employed six different criteria for the classification of the peasantry: area, tenurial status, relation to the labour market, reproduction of the family and the farm, participation in production, culture and ideology. At present, one also has to discuss not only the primary but also the secondary relations of exploitation. The latter includes not only rent relations, usury and commercial exploitation, but also the redistribution of surplus via the price system. With such an approach, the middle peasant households are those which operate land and whose farm income is sufficient to meet the grain requirements of the household, but insufficient for non-grain consumption requirements, and/or the cash cost of reproduction of the farm, and/or cash cost to replace family labour with hired labour.[108] And in such an analysis the middle peasantry is a substantial stratum. It seems to be increasing and are constantly facing a "reproduction squeeze". It is very dependent on non-farm sources of income and relations on the market, and are most frequent in dry areas where access to water demands expensive inputs such as pumps and electricity. This enables us to understand the broad following of the farmers' movement in terms of, firstly, the huge numbers of peasants who are threatened and for whom price relations are decisive for them, and secondly, many labourers have no other option but to hang on, since their interest in land and lower rents are no longer interesting for the middle peasants.[109]

This is not only a question of employing different concepts but a serious theoretical conflict with far-reaching political implications. Rudra does have a strong point when he follows up by refuting the thesis about exploitation via terms of trade. Omvedt and Gala argued

that rural labourers are not only exploited by the rich farmer but also by the urban capitalists, who can buy at low prices from the *kulaks* what the labourers have produced. But this would imply that "when any consumer purchases a product he indulges in exploitation of the direct producers who produced it. . .. Exploitation is (instead) a relation between classes. This relation can never exist between any two such sectors like agriculture and industry, between any two areas like urban and rural areas, or even between any two countries like a colonial country and an imperialist country. When one talks about an imperialist country 'exploiting' a colonial country one means the appropriation not of any surplus but a part of the national product of the colonial country by the imperialist country by various mechanisms of extra-economic nature. This 'exploitation' does not involve the concept of surplus (labour) just as plunder does not. . . . This mechanism can in no way be understood in the framework of Marx's model of capitalist exploitation. The beauty of that model lies precisely in that it involves no underpayment."[110]

This reasoning effectively refutes shallow arguments about the rural sector being exploited by the urban one etc. But unfortunately it may also lead us into narrow analyses of the primary relations of exploitation and set aside the increasingly important secondary ones, as pointed out by Djurfeldt and Lindberg et al. It must be stressed that their way of analysing both relations of exploitation is not, as far as I can see, in contradiction with Rudra's way of defining exploitation— "the appropriation of surplus value, which is defined as the difference between the value of the product and the value of the labour power (or alternatively the value of the subsistence requirements of the direct producers) appropriated by the owners of the means of production"[111]— since they also take the subsistence requirements as a point of departure.[112]

The real problem is rather that while most attempts at taking the secondary relations of exploitation into consideration widen the horizon from the primary processes of production and the village, which is necessary, they also set aside a substantial analysis of the means and conditions of production, as well as of the role of the state, in order to concentrate instead on the distribution of surplus labour. We get a more accurate picture of how surplus is appropriated and distributed. However, we still know very little about the basis for this— the unequal control over means and conditions of production. And even more seriously: we are left without necessary knowledge about the balance of power, the importance of state power and intervention, *and*

the way in which classes, social and political movements etc. can struggle for change.

Another critic of Omvedt and Gala, Balagopal, has expressed this in another way. "You cannot organise the rural poor directly around issues such as drought, deforestation or exploitation by urban capital in a *revolutionary* way. These issues have to be built into a struggle that is structured around a fight against their immediate oppressors." It is the monopolisation of the decisive means of production that has to be the basis of confrontation if we are out for a radical change.[113]

A way of solving these problems should be, I suggest, to follow not only the production and distribution of surplus but also to locate the means and conditions of production involved. This does not prevent us from going outside the primary processes of production. As I pointed out in Chapter Two, Banaji showed that "a monied capitalist (e.g. a merchant, moneylender) may dominate the small producer on a *capitalist* basis, he may, in other words extort surplus-value from him, without standing out as the 'immediate owner of the process of production'. In this case his domination will be based on control of *only portions* of the means of subsistence and production of the small producer. For example, he may advance to him his raw materials or tools without exercising any specific control over, or pressure on, the small enterprise."[114]

In the supplementary theoretical proposition advanced in Chapter Two, I took this as one of my points of departure and tried to show that substantial and decisive conditions of production besides of those directly involved in the processes of production (such as private land) are controlled from outside— not least from within various co-operative organs and state apparatuses on different levels. These resources are not only plundered and traded but also "invested"— in return for a share of the surplus labour which is produced.

I suggest, thus, that this perspective can help us to analyse the roots of exploitation— and not only conflicts over the distribution of the surplus product— which form a basis for many of the new social movements, including the farmers'. The green revolution was enforced not least by way of the introduction of externally controlled new means and conditions of production, such as different inputs and credits. This meant that many more than the already well-off farmers benefited. But it was also partly an artificial way of increasing output and the standard of living, which to some extent reminds us of the grand distribution of international credits in the seventies which later led to the debt crisis.

Even when most of these new credits were invested, agricultural production did not become significantly more efficient and the markets did not expand. And then came the oil crisis. The key to an understanding of the new balance of power and contradictions is precisely an analysis of how these resources are controlled, traded, and invested, and thereby are employed as a basis for the secondary exploitation of the producers.

This is not to subscribe to the idea that the agricultural labourer is exploited by urban consumers who can buy "cheap food".[115] But many petty producers who are also labourers are exploited in the way that I have described. Even more people are affected by this form of exploitation if the unit of analysis is taken to be households rather than individuals. And so are many small, middle and even well-off farmers. This power over the conditions of production as a basis for exploitation help us explaining many of the new contradictions, including new social movements in general and the farmers' movement in particular.

Where, then, is the upper limit? Are the so-called *kulaks* also exploited? Those who stress the importance of new *kulaks* may prefer a low cut-off point. I will soon return to how this is done in the case of Java. In the Indian framework, the Rudolphs,[116] for example, talk about increasingly important "bullock capitalists" with more than 2.5 acres (1 hectare) of land. To begin with, this can be criticised from the point of view that it is more likely, generally speaking, that only those who according to traditional standards are not "small farmers", but have at least 4.99 acres (two hectares) or more are strong enough to be called "bullock capitalists". If this cut-off point is employed, the "bullock capitalists" have instead decreased while marginal and small farmers have increased.[117]

This criticism can be further developed. It is not only the size of the farm or to what extent labour is employed, for example, but *also* to what extent the whole set of conditions of production are controlled, plundered, traded, and/or invested. Many of these conditions of production may also be controlled by non-farmers such as merchants and administrators— i.e. my different types of rentiers and financiers. Such an operation would presumably leave us with different factions of peasants and farmers with a quite unequal control of the necessary conditions of production— as well as many labourers. Of course there is no unified peasantry. But we could also identify factions, operating within or through state organs for example, who are in strategic command of conditions of production and who not only employ these resources on farms, which at least some of them do, but also demand

rent from many different kind of producers. Those below *this* cut-off point should then have in common a substantial interest in de-monopolising this control over strategic resources— in the same way as a majority of the producers previously shared anti-feudal interests of de-monopolising the control of private land.

At present it seems, however, as if these interests are diluted and channelled particularly by the farmers' movement through their demands for better terms of trade as well as for more subsidies, rather than by struggles for de-monopolisation by way of bourgeois privatisation or popular democratisation. Meanwhile the left seems to be preoccupied with either hanging on to farmers' demands or still trying to employ old theses about anti-landlordism and labour versus new *kulaks*.

Intensive disputes about state and agrarian transformation *in Java* took place during the fifties and sixties. Questions such as why there was a lack of progressive development, what could be done, and how one could therefore understand various social and political movements were addressed. Boeke's analysis in terms of dualism[118] was, just like many other aspects of the old Dutch hegemony, replaced by an American way of trying to understand, within the framework of the sociological streams of the modernisation school of thought, why there had been neither evolution nor revolution in Java but rather "involution". This was the Geertzian way of putting it. According to one of his main supportive arguments, there was a tendency towards "shared poverty"; a rather equal fractionalisation of land and wealth rather than concentration and polarisation.[119]

The political-economy implications were clear enough. There was no basis for radical class-based politics, including those based on a Marxist understanding. A Weberian framework, including an emphasis on cultural and religious causes for stagnation as well as ideas about modern administration, was, however, useful. This could be employed, for example, by those who favoured Sukarno's concept of the small independent and non-exploitative Javanese producer, as well as by international developmentalists who found it necessary to identify and support various entrepreneurial and modernising social forces. The latter were initially found among so-called modernist Muslim organisations and small technocratic socialist groups; later on they were sought out within the army.

This perspective was, of course, disputed by many Marxists as well as by Communist leaders. As I have already mentioned in the first two chapters, the PKI launched their own investigations of rural

differentiation. The irony is, however, that the debate over Geertz's school of thought became even more intensive and sophisticated during the New Order, when the socio-economic and political situation which had produced the dispute had changed and was rapidly disappearing. Rather than addressing and trying to analyse the decisive importance of the state and its interventions, of new rural protests against the state rather than against landlords or *kulaks*, and new social movements, most scholars became almost obsessed with Geertz's "involution" in general and his "shared poverty" in particular. This so called reactionary expression of the modernisation school was bypassed in the actual development of Java but was still a target in seminar rooms. It could now be fought by analyses of how capitalism was expanding within the framework of the green revolution— analyses which nevertheless had to be carried out in order to disclose how the rural poor were suffering under the new regime.[120] Some claimed that an almost full-fledged agrarian capitalism was about to develop with clear contradictions between farmers and rural proletarians.[121] Others found neither capitalist farmers nor a unified proletariat, only marginalisation, increasing differentiation and so on.[122] There were also influential neo-populists who concentrated on how technological change led to the displacement of many poor peasants and labourers.[123] And historians could show that commercialisation, agrarian differentiation, exclusionary labour arrangements etc. were nothing new but had developed in an uneven way over perhaps hundreds of years.[124] Geertz was not only wrong because of new and rapid transformations but had always been wrong from the very beginning.

The list could be made much longer, even though it is difficult to systematise most studies according to their theoretical point of departure— most of them are quite a-theoretical case studies— or even by way of a comparison— most scholars abstain from relating their results not only to other research in the Far East and even to other studies in Java. However, it seems as if the discussion has now entered more innovative directions. The interesting question is no longer if and how Geertz was and is wrong, but rather how an indisputable commercialisation, differentiation, etc. can be analysed.

One point of departure for the discussion is the results from recent attempts at returning to villages which had been studied during the early and mid-seventies. According to a resurvey of nine Javanese villages[125] it was noted that as many as 30-40 per cent of the households had benefited from the enforced green revolution. There were even signs of declining absolute landlessness.[126] Some 75 per cent of the households

still received an income from farming and almost 90 per cent owned some land.[127] Generally speaking, half of all households owned only small plots of *sawah* land below 0.5 hectares. But they still controlled as much as one-third of the total area. And only 6 per cent of the families had more than one hectare of *sawah* land, controlling some 40 per cent of the area. If one also includes dry-land, more than 60 per cent were tiny farmers with less than 0.5 hectares, and some 10 per cent had more than one hectare.[128] Hence, there were no big landowners who monopolised land but rather many middle and petty peasants. Obviously many of these households had to get additional incomes from other sources than agriculture. Neither were the few larger farmers big landowners. Counting both *sawah* and dry-land, only some 0.2 per cent of the households had more than five hectares of land, 2.4 per cent had between two and five hectares, 8.1 per cent between one and two hectares and 16.1 per cent between 0.5 and 1 hectare.[129] In addition to this it was only some 2 per cent of the households which had rent on land as their main source of income. And only some 13 per cent had farm labouring as their main income.[130] This had decreased between 1976/77 and 1983 by as much as 31 per cent.[131] Many people worked outside agriculture. Farming was the only source of income for about 13 per cent of the households, the main income for more than 50 per cent and the most important minor source for 20 per cent.[132] Many people were wage workers. But many of the households still had a little land. And besides some few servants, less than 2 per cent of the labourers were permanently employed.[133]

Much more could be said and referred to. Nothing, however, indicates that landlordism with a lot of poor tenants, or big capitalist farming with a substantial class of agricultural workers, had emerged. Chris Manning concluded with words such as "(there was) little evidence of a *general* trend towards polarisation of economic classes. . . increasing immiserisation of the rural poor. . .emergence of a sizable *kulak* class of rich peasants or a general increase in land concentration".[134] But he also stressed the importance of off-farm employment and business opportunities in the late seventies and early eighties, during the oil boom.[135]

Other researchers have advanced quite different conclusions— but unfortunately without comparing their results with others' (despite, or perhaps because, they often work together). Basing themselves on a resurvey of nine Javanese villages, White and Wiradi say, for example, "that increasing landlessness now leaves about half of all households without *sawah* ownership rights and about 40 per cent without

cultivation rights. The decline in share tenancies has contributed to the relative decline of smaller farm households (although their absolute numbers may not have decreased), allowing average farm sizes to increase despite the pressures of population growth, agriculture remains dominated by small groups of households owning more than 1.0 hectares of *sawah* who (although comprising less than 9 per cent of all households in the nine sample neighbourhoods) own more than half of the available *sawah*."[136] They now "speak with greater confidence of the emergence of opposing 'commercial farmer/employer' and 'landless agricultural labourer' classes. . . at either end of a still large but relatively declining mass of petty commodity producing small-farm households still retaining some access to land and (particularly at the lower end of the scale) supplementing inadequate own-farm incomes with wage labour".[137] However, since non-farm income provides almost two-thirds of the total income in the sample neighbourhoods, it is, they admit, difficult to take these results as a characterisation of ruling classes. Not even the landless have formed a working class. It is, they proceed, better to talk about semi-proletarians.[138] The small owners of land do not have to sell out their land since they can survive thanks to off-farm sources of income.[139] And the surplus producing farmers— who get access to most of the official subsidies, credits etc— are not mainly investing in expanding their agriculture and acquiring more land, but rather in off-farm business opportunities.[140]

Similar conclusions are put forward as generalisations by Hüsken and White in another paper.[141] Sizes of land are very small. Almost all farms are small. However, 10 to 20 per cent of the rural households with holdings above one hectare of land control 70-80 per cent of all farm land and produce the bulk of the marketed surplus with the use of wage labour.[142]

There is no need here to go deeper into the various arguments and their sources. White and others are not saying that there is a tendency towards large scale capitalist farmers on the one hand and an agricultural working class on the other. But they are, in partial contradiction to other scholars, emphasising the internal differentiation among the comparatively small farmers. Some 10 to 20 per cent of the households seem to develop as *kulaks*, while the rest fall behind, the landless increase, and wage labour becomes more and more important.

With full respect for the often very stimulating and high quality research which has been produced, is this a real and fruitful controversy? Proletarianisation and concentration of land do not seem to be the main

issues any more. One can thus set aside the still problematic bases for many of these calculations.[143] The position of White et al. seems to be in line with those in India who stress the importance of the *kulaks* and primary relations of exploitation.[144] Despite the fact that almost all scholars on rural Java, including White et al. themselves, now stress the importance of off-farm sources of income for the better-off as well as for the labourers,[145] farm size, and to some extent the appropriation of rent on land and surplus value produced by hired labour, are still taken as *the* important points of departure. Secondary relations of exploitation are rarely analysed (I will soon return to some exceptions), and are only mentioned as supplementary factors. And we still know very little about how and to what extent the farmer is able to appropriate surplus on top of what is needed to reproduce the family, the farm, and the labourers etc. Almost all scholars working at present realise that if some farmers with only about one hectare of *sawah* land in Java can now appropriate surplus on top of all the costs for the reproduction of household, farm, and labour, this is so because of massive state subsidies.[146] White and Hüsken themselves mention and quantify some of the huge sums involved.[147] These subsidies have not only led to a partly artificial development, but have also made most of the quite small farmers dependent on subsidies in the form of various cheap inputs, credits, support prices etc. Most of them, therefore, do not own or even control these necessary conditions of production.[148] Under such conditions the size of land, or even the standard of living, are problematic criteria— especially when one tries to explain opposition against those who command the additional resources.

As I have already hinted, there have been some attempts at taking different ways of appropriating surplus into consideration. Both Hüsken and Wolters[149] try to analyse seven mechanisms: rent from labour services, rent in kind or sharecropping, the extraction of surplus value in wage labour relationships, extraction via the terms of trade, credit and usury by moneylenders, rent in cash, and taxes to the state. But the possibility to demand and appropriate rent through privileged control over most of the increasingly important external resources, such as inputs advanced through different organs of the state and state-controlled co-operatives, is still not dealt with.

Already the factual analyses of the class struggle rarely consider that much of the land in the villages is in principle public, while control by way of first getting elected[150] or appointed into the village administration[151] should also be mentioned.[152] This does not mean much if we are only interested in how assets are distributed. But the

way in which assets are controlled and used in order to appropriate surplus labour are, of course, of vital importance if we are interested in the relations of power and conflict.

Most scholars agree about the importance of rural wage labour as well as about the fact that many labourers still have access to small pieces of land and diverse sources of extra income both within and outside agriculture, including many temporary jobs, self-employment, etc. There is no unified agricultural proletariat. And some add the important fact that labour is not only employed by well-off farmers but also by tiny ones. But having said this, the importance of control over this huge labour force is often forgotten about. Most of the labourers obviously cannot be domesticated only by economic means. Many are still able to survive for some time within petty commodity production, trading etc. if they do not get a job. Quite a few labourers also have small pieces of land which they are eager to keep as a basic source of income. In addition to this, very few are permanently employed and disciplined within the processes of production. The control and command over extra-economic means— usually through various organs of the state— by which rural labour can be controlled and disciplined is thus an extremely important condition of production to take into consideration in any analysis of the dynamics of rural class struggle.[153]

Interesting research about the importance of the state is now appearing.[154] But as I have pointed out in Chapter two, even the most exciting analysis so far, by Gillian Hart, mainly focuses on the importance or capacity of state institutions in terms of the effective control of labour and patronage by way of distributing real assets. The way in which this control and monopoly over regulative powers and resources is used also in order to appropriate surplus labour from the actual producers is not approached.[155]

The result is, therefore, as in the recent very informative and stimulating paper by Hüsken and White, that the importance of the largely unexplained state patronage is added as an unintegrated supplement to a basic analysis of the primary relations of exploitation in the same way as other complications such as off-farm investments and incomes, the lack of a unified agrarian proletariat etc.

The result is also that it is still very difficult to employ their new and exciting analyses of the socio-economic structure in rural Java in order to explain the rather longstanding and crucial rural protests which I discussed earlier in this chapter, against the state on various levels and particularly against those who operate from within it.

From the point of view of my previous supplementary theoretical proposition, the recent controversy over the character of socio-economic differentiation is thus somewhat misleading. Polarisation and inequalities etc. are definitely there and are probably increasing. However, it is easy to understand why some researchers hesitate to say that this forms the basis for a division of class. The contradiction between *kulaks* and labourers is definitely present but does not seem to be decisive. In my view the main though still comparatively un-researched contradiction seems rather to be between, on the one hand, those who are not only temporarily benefiting from other necessary conditions of production than private land (like many comparatively small farmers), but also control these resources and can demand monopoly rent for letting them out, and on the other hand the actual producers (including the many marginal farmers) who are in desperate need of the resources, as well as the labourers who need viable employers and are dominated not only by the market but also by harsh extra-economic means. This may become a powerful basis for broad based struggles in favour of democratisation of the control and rule of common resources— if the issue is not left to the big so-called *kulaks* with their ability to mobilise dependent and weak farmers, as well as to link up with some of the rentiers and financiers in order to promote de-monopolisation by way of state-led exlusionary privatisation.

State and Civil Society

The intensive debate about the role and character of new social movements and NGOs has mainly focused on the crisis of the top-down development project of the post-colonial state and on the balance between "state and civil society". I will discuss the main arguments.

Speaking in favour of so-called non-party formations in the Indian framework, Rajni Kothari has summarised the decisive arguments in the following characteristic way:

> "(T)he engines of growth are in decline, the organised working class is not growing, the process of marginalization is spreading, Technology is turning anti-people. Development has become an instrument of the privileged class, and the State has lost its role as an agent of transformation, or even as a mediator in the affairs of Civil Society. It is a context of massive centralisation of power and resources, a centralization that does

> not stop at the national frontiers either. . . . (T)he party system (and the organised democratic process) is in a state of decline and is being replaced by a non-political managerial class and technicians of corruption. . . . (R)evolutionary parties too have been contained and in part coopted (as have most of the unions). . . . (T)he traditional fronts of radical action— the working class movement and the militant peasantry led by left parties— are in deep crisis . . .(T)here appears to be a growing hiatus between these parties and the lower classes, especially the very poor and the destitute. . . . (T)here is taking place a massive backlash from established interests . . . against the working classes as well as the unorganised sections . . . and a steep rise in the repression and terror of the State. . . . It is with the plight of these rejects of society and of organised politics, as also ironically of revolutionary theory and received doctrines of all schools of thought, that the grassroots movements and non-party formations are concerned. . . . They are to be seen as attempts to open alternative political spaces outside the usual arenas of party and government though not outside the State, rather as new forms of organisation and struggle meant to rejuvenate the State and make it once again an instrument of liberation from the morass in which the underprivileged and the oppressed are trapped.[156]

Almost the same could have been stated about some of the Indonesian movements and NGOs by "the Rajni Kothari on Indonesia"— Herb Feith. It should be added, though, that he as well as others are also eager to stress, in the Indonesian framework, that there are at least two decisive perspectives: one stance held by those who wish to strengthen the autonomy of legal institutions and the media and voluntary organisations. Another stance is taken by the "New Right" libertarians who argue in favour of independent private business and against monopolies supported by the government.[157]

Similar characteristics are also put forward by A.G. Frank and M. Fuentes in an attempt to analyse what they maintain is a worldwide rise of new social movements:

> (W)orking class social movements must be regarded as both recent and temporary . . . Far more than 'classical' class movements, the social movements motivate and mobilise hundreds of millions of people in all parts of the world— mostly

> outside established political and social institutions that people find inadequate to serve their needs— which is why they have recourse to 'new' largely non-institutionalised social movements. . . . (S)ocial movements generate and wield social power through the social mobilisation of their participants. This social power is at once generated by and derived from the social *movement* itself, rather than from any institution, political or otherwise. . .. Thus, the new self-organising social movements confront existing (state) political power through new social power, which modifies political power.[158]

Besides stressing this anti-state position even more than Kothari and Feith, Frank and Fuentes also give prime importance to "the world economic crisis" as a basic cause for the emergence of the new social movements. They have very little to say about the character of this crisis and almost totally neglect any analysis of the state and its institutions, as well as relations of political power. Their grand generalisations are instead exclusively sociological and almost economistic. The crisis has, nevertheless, "reduced the efficacy of, and popular confidence in, the nation state and its customary political institutions as defenders and promoters of people's interests."[159]

This is thus a kind of defensive popular struggle. But Frank and Fuentes also maintain that in view of the defeat of socialists who have tried to grab and utilise state power, the old ideal of the "utopian socialists" may be much more realistic. The new social movements may "modify the system . . . by changing its systematic linkages."[160]

Several revolutionary Marxists are rethinking and discussing social and political change in a slightly different way. In the Indian framework Barat Patankar, for example, stresses the fact that there are many urgent contradictions— like those generated by women and caste oppression, state repression as well as the ecological crisis— besides the one between capital and labour. These are the basis for the genuine new social, cultural *and* political movements. The contemporary Political Project is, therefore, not to build the Party on the basis of a workers' and peasants' alliance and to grab state power, but rather to work from below, within various movements and in favour of an alliance between them.[161]

Perspectives like these are at present quite mainstream among dissident *Indonesians*. The alternatives are few, there are no independent parties, and the position of the authoritarian regime is strong and quite stable,

even if some turbulence is about to emerge at the élite level over the inevitable succession of President Suharto in the not-too-distant future. There are, of course, different orientations. The quite weak leftists usually stress the need to mobilise huge masses and to build strong countervailing forces against state and capital. The more influential centrists focus on building more autonomous institutions and groups. And the rather strong rightists stress the freedom of capital and the market against state regulation.

In *India*, however, many of the new social movements and voluntary organisations are not only seen as a threat against an authoritarian state but also against The Revolutionary Tradition and Forces.

According to *their first main argument*, most new social movements and NGOs are part of an imperialist strategy. Many of these movements and organisations are entirely dependent on foreign funding. They are seen as part of a World Bank strategy to bypass third world governments and thus covertly enforce more "liberal" development policies. The movements and NGOs become a hothouse for new interventionism, privatisation etc.[162]

Nothing is, according to this point of view, necessarily wrong with charity and voluntary relief groups etc. as long as they are truly non-political. But many of the new movements and organisations are actually political. They should therefore be subject to the same restrictions when it comes to foreign funding as are political parties.[163] They aim at making people conscious, and able to mobilise and organise themselves. According to the CPI-M's leading theoretician in this field Prakash Karat, they make a "caricature of a revolutionary party's Leninist organisational principles"[164] and they "divert and derail the working people's attention from the real tasks of social revolution".[165] He also claims that "their very existence challenges the notion of a macro-Bolshevik party as the only viable agency for social transformation. . . .(T)he left is irrelevant, it has to be bypassed".[166] So-called action-oriented documentation and research groups contribute to "information imperialism". Their information provide a "valuable intelligence base for policy-planning, and for interventionist strategies."[167] The so-called autonomous women's movement is based on "(t)he bourgeois feminist ideology which is in vogue in the western capitalist countries" and this is "injected into India".[168] Many social movements and voluntary organisations are also a threat against national unity because they promote communalism, caste and ethnic conflicts etc.[169] According to Karat, they have even managed to

infiltrate the union government in such a way that the present Ministries and Government have entrusted many voluntary foreign-funded groups with the running and implementation of development programmes. This is thus a concrete example of privatisation.[170] It is quite another thing if elected and publicly responsible governments co-operate with private business and various foreign agencies. And these new social movements and NGOs are in no way free from abuse, corruption etc.

There is, therefore, a need for an "ideological campaign against the eclectic and pseudo-radical postures of action groups. Their suspicion of the working class movement, their hostility to any centralised organisations, their silence on the socialist bloc and its struggle for peace against the war threats of imperialism, their willingness to become vehicles of anti-Soviet propaganda, their simplistic glorification of 'people' at the expense of classes, their ideological roots in American community development and pluralist theories" must be exposed and resisted.[171]

This "foreign funding and new imperialist strategy" argument may also include the important observation that many of the new movements and NGOs can substitute solid socio-economic roots and popular mobilisation with their access to funds which naturally attract many people.[172] Some leading activists turn petty entrepreneurs. And their role as intellectuals is less organically linked with the dynamics of popular struggles than with trendy discussions among the concerned international development "jet set".[173] It could also, among other things, be added that the increasing frustration among left- as well as right-oriented development officers over inefficiency, corruption etc. within third world state administration promote each other and may lead to renewed interest in Huntingtons old prescription, which was adopted by not least the US, that effective "assistance" in building "modern" and "stable" institutions, including the army as the often only reliable and "modern" institution, is a prerequisite for effective economic and social development aid.

As far as I can see, these and similar arguments, however, totally neglect the question as to whether the basic thesis of those in favour of the new social movements and NGOs— the crisis and the authoritarian character of the post-colonial state development project— is valid or not.

Also, the very argument about funding and backing is often based on a "guilt by association" logic. Struggles for human rights and democracy may be polemically linked with figures like the ex-presidents

Carter and Reagan: the fact that many businessmen and CIA-agents, for example, were involved in the struggles for democracy in the Philippines can be used against many of the new movements and action groups. "A lot of what Kothari says may be right but he used to be linked to the American Lobby, so I prefer to stay away", said a previously prominent and on many other questions rethinking Indian Communist. And the likes of him in Java often state that "one should not forget that most of the leaders within our radical NGOs were instrumental in eliminating the whole Indonesian Left and in bringing Suharto into power."

If the same logic is applied from the other point of view, an interesting case could however be made of the fact that the Suharto government in Indonesia and conservative Indian Communists both make use of almost the same arguments and propose similar restrictions against new social movements and many NGOs. Or why did the Communists not give up "bourgeois" land reforms during the fifties and early sixties when agencies like the Food and Agricultural Organisation actually intervened in favour of them? And why is it that most anti-colonial struggles after the Second World War were not branded counter-revolutionary, since Washington was quite supportive as long as previous colonial monopolies were undermined and the way for free international capital was opened?

The basic logic of those who are against the new movements and organisations may therefore be another one: that human rights and democracy are fine, but only when fought for and led by organisations which have a solid base among the working classes. But who is to judge and how? According to most Communist parties, they are, almost by definition, the sole representatives of the working classes. Reflective Communists sometimes agree that this is a significant problem.[174] Experienced NGO activists in Kerala, for example, remarked that the CPI-M seemed to be more nervous about the lack of Communist influence within certain movements and organisations than about foreign funding as such.[175]

There is, of course, something sound in the argument that there is a major difference between firstly the co-operation between at least an elected government which is publicly responsible for its actions and foreign funds, and secondly private non-elected organisations, non-democratic movements and foreign agencies. But if democratic organisation and control is the main precondition for non-governmental international co-operation, why is not the democratisation of the movements, organisations *and* the parties (including the Communist

ones) made into a major demand? And if we once again apply the problematic "class position", why should priority be given to a state/government which, according to most Indian Communists themselves, is based on big monopoly capitalists, and landlords who co-operate with imperialists? On the other hand, to fight for democratisation of the state organs and thus, for instance, for influence over their foreign funds, certainly makes sense.

The second main argument from within the Communist tradition is less preoccupied with the question of funding and tackles instead some of the theoretical fundamentals, and the political implications of the new social movements and voluntary organisations.

Frank and Fuentes, for example, are accused of over-generalising and neglecting both historical and contemporary regional and local specificities. They do not carry out any analysis of the relations between various movements and groups on the one hand, and social and political actors on the other hand. When the concept of a "social movement" includes almost everything from football associations to political study and action groups, there is some room for clarification. And if "social power" and autonomy etc. are put forward as alternatives to "state power" the historically obvious need for conscious and organised activist intervention to foster radical change is totally neglected.[176]

This "lack of driving social and political forces" argument is often based on the observation that many new social movements and NGOs tend to avoid conflicts over relations of exploitation. It could also be added that, with the main exception of some fundamental religious organisations, the new movements have rarely been able to replace traditional parties and mass organisations as major political agents of change. And most attempts at forming new parties on the basis of social movements have failed.[177]

One could also question the idea about a general crisis of the post- colonial state development project. The state has no doubt been a leading agent in almost all the cases of rapid development, particularly in the Far East. And modern state regulation has been decisive in most places of the world where economic growth has been combined with some equity. What would happen if weak groups like the scheduled castes in India, for example, were left without the possibility to rely on at least some state protection besides local social forces and movements? Would not the strong groups dominate totally? And even if tribal populations or unviable peasants, for example, must be defended against state-enforced rapid growth, what other force but the

state *could* guide a reasonably balanced national development? Neither free hands for the strong or conservative defence of so-called backward sections would work. If the post-colonial state is incapable of solving a lot of problems, the way out is therefore hardly foreign intervention and privatisation but to improve its capacity and way of functioning.

From another point of view it can, however, be maintained that the Communists— not to mention most other political parties and leaders, who accuse new social movements and NGOs of defending primitive petty commodity producers who have to give way for modernisation— are equally eager to defend "their" petty producers and/or special communal and interest groups in order not to lose sympathisers. And even if the state *might* stand for the common will and good, regulate balanced development, defend the weak and keep an eye on the strong, a necessary though not sufficient precondition for this seems to be some autonomy and a capacity among the citizens themselves to protect, enforce and sustain such policies against authoritarian tendencies, for example. To promote new social movements and NGOs is not necessarily "worse" than to contribute to such a stronger "civil society". The development of any kind of absolutist state in the third world must be fought against there, as it is in Eastern Europe.

The Communists who talk about the need for political actors, efficient organisations, the need to grab state power etc. should, finally, also consider some neglected aspects of the political strategy. The established left has been incapable of mobilising the majority of the weaker and often "marginalised" population. This is precisely what many of the new movements and groups try to do. It is a paradox that traditional radical organisations are strongest within, and capable of attacking, the comparatively well functioning and productive parts of the economy— while they are quite weak and incapable of counteracting the increasing "informal" production within "sweat-shops", for example, as well as more or less parasitic trade and commerce, political and administrative rents etc. Just like an army is quite powerless without the constant supply of food and ammunition and a well functioning infrastructure, opposing forces among the people have to develop their logistical base— by way of organising and making use of the only capacity that poor and weak people have left: their capacity to work. Various independent co-operatives may therefore be created. Alternative health, education, information and other networks could emerge. It may also be more efficient to undermine the base of the

generals in this way, rather than by trying to confront their machineguns and tanks.[178]

The problem is thus: that many of the arguments on both sides are important, but neither mutually exclusive nor possible to combine as they stand. At present the conceptual vagueness and arbitrariness of these arguments against the new movements and organisations are best illustrated by the fact that the same reasoning can even be employed, for instance by the CPI-M, in order to defend the onslaught on the Chinese movement for democratisation.[179]

The arguments in defence of the new movements and organisations, on the other hand, often boil down to a sympathetic strengthening of "the civil society" against "the state". The "civil society" is often used as a synonym for "the economy" or the market, and for the area of private life. "The state" is usually the political and administrative "superstructure". It is not necessary to enter the discussion about various definitions of "state and civil society"[180] in order to realise that the two are extremely difficult to separate and thus quite unfruitful as scientific concepts. We are far from the classical bourgeois and popular struggles against a monolithic and fairly solid absolutist state.

A main result of the previous analyses in this book is that state and private institutions, processes etc. are more or less informally intertwined. "Civil society against the state" is not particularly helpful when one wants to distinguish between various movements and their aims and means. And the frontier against "New Right" libertarians is at present wide open. Much of the recent regeneration of the these notions, with their basis in the development of private property and civil liberties, is actually based on an understanding of what happened in then non-capitalist Poland which makes it even more paradoxial. Solidarity was not based mainly on private property holders, but attacked the dominance of the ruling party and of bureaucrats. Until some years ago it was usually against, rather than in favour of, the privatisation of formally public resources.

But to argue, on the contrary, that a distinction between "state and civil society" is unfruitful because "the state" is just a reflection of the "civil society" is really throwing out the baby with the bath-water. What is going on within the state and its non-private bases is then at best reduced to what is, according to Poulantzas, functional for the reproduction of the mode of production.

From the point of view of the previous theoretical proposition, it is instead possible to continue the discussion about the obvious but diverse struggles against "the state" in terms of the struggle over control and regulation of certain resources of power. This does not imply that we have to replace the traditional historical materialist analysis of the "economic base" with, for example, institutional approaches of the state, in order not to lose sight of "state capacities". Before we enter into the institutional field, it is instead possible to add studies of if and how surplus is appropriated via rent on the often decisive formally public conditions of production which are external to the direct processes of production and which are to a great extent controlled precisely from within the state in countries like Indonesia and India. One of the main conclusions is that there is therefore a need and an option for the real producers to fight for more control over means and conditions of production by way of democratisation.

Struggles against the informal privatisation of formally public assets and their regulation did and does thus go on in more or less non-capitalist countries such as those in Eastern Europe and China as well as in societies as diverse as India and Indonesia, South Korea, Burma and the Philippines.

And different new social movements, NGOs and their well-wishers, may be further analysed in terms of what and whose control and use of formally public resources they are up against, as well as what alternatives they suggest and practice. Do they opt for privatisation and/or democratisation? Which state capacities do they want to weaken or strengthen and how?

In a strategical perspective this thus brings us beyond not only the traditional idea of confronting "the state" from outside in order to "grab state power" but also beyond the recent supposition that new social movements and NGOs can transform societies by once again standing outside, but being autonomous and negating state power. The option is rather to democratise control and regulation of public resources.

NOTES

1. CPI (1975), p. 34.
2. Ibid., p. 34f.
3. AIKS (1979), p. 73.
4. Ibid., p. 74.
5. Ibid., p. 75.
6. Ibid., p. 76 f.

7. Ibid., p. 85.
8. CPI-M (1981), p. 12.
9. It is thus not entirely correct to say that the Communist parties have developed an interest for these questions only recently and for opportunistic reasons, when new non-Communist-led so-called farmers' movements in favour of better prices gained spectacular national importance in the early eighties. I shall return to these in the sections ahead.
10. CPI-M (1981), p. 12f.
11. For example, interview with V. Athreya, Tiruchirapalli 1985 02 11-12, with M.K. Bhat, Bangalore, 1985 01 30, Irfan Habib, Aligarh, 1985 03 10.
12. See e.g. (CPI-M), 1982, pp. 125 ff.
13. See e.g. the report from the 13th Congress of the CPI-M in *People's Democracy* January 22 (1989), pp. 15, 18, 22. Cf. also *People's Democracy* April 16, May 14, and June 4 (1989).
14. Mishra (1986), p. 6f. Cf. also Mishra (1985).
15. According to Rana the enemy thus also include discretionary CPI-M leaders in command of resources within West Bengal *panchayats*.
16. Interview 1985 03 03 Cf. also the analysis of Dev Nathan in Selden (1988), pp. 38f: Besides the landlords from the upper castes, who corner modern inputs, irrigation, bank loans etc. through the state in order to accumulate their own lands, there is a rising bourgeois-oriented peasantry who are eager to keep down their labourers' wages but whom Naxalites should try to link up with against the landlords.
17. For general review and analysis of the farmers' movements, see Nadkarni (1987); for short summaries of recent developments, see FEER 1988 03 10, 88 03 24, 89 02 23. I also draw on communications with Staffan Lindberg about his research on the farmers' movements, especially 1989 04 26; cf. Lindberg (1981). Further references will be given in my analysis in some sub-sections ahead of the debates on the character of the farmers' movements.
18. According to Nadkarni (1987), p. 39, "one of the demands of farmers in Karnataka is to reserve 50 per cent of governments jobs for their sons."
19. In addition to communication from Lindberg 89 04 26, discussions with N. Ram 1985 02 13 and C.T. Kurien 85 02 14.
20. *FEER* 1988 03 24.
21. *FEER* 1989 02 23 p. 21.
22. Nadkarni (1987) eg. pp. 55ff.
23. Ibid., p. 53 and p. 220 in which he arrives at the conclusion that due to stagnation in output "at least 44 per cent of the increase in money costs was due to an increase in real costs — a problem which cannot be solved through terms of trade."
24. Cf Schiller (1988).
25. For short reviews of the recent events see FEER 1985 11 21, 87 03 19 and 87 10 27.
26. I would like to emphasise that this trend in Indonesia (and partly also in India) is on line with the new prescriptions from the World Bank in its *World Development Report* (1986). There should, among other things, be less protection and more international trade with food products. Cf. Sau (1986) who suggests that this is partly due to the increasing petroleum based green revolution inputs and export interests within surplus producing countries such as USA, where agri-business in control of new genetic engineering is also on the offensive.

27. Cf.Manning (1987).
28. Proposed by the Minister of Agriculture in August 1984. See van Someren (1985).
29. Hart (1986), p. 208.
30. Ibid., pp. 210f.
31. For a brief introduction of the conventional conceptualisation, see for instance Hague and Harrop (1987).
32. For a discussion about community and communal organisation among workers in Bombay, see Pendse (1983) and Panjwani (1983).
33. SeePUDR & PUCL (1984).
34. Mohanty (1987), p. 6.
35. This is mainly the position of various Naxalite groups, see eg. *Report from the Flaming Fields of Bihar* (1986) and Banerjee (1988). The CPI-M, particularly the Politburo member Ranadive, has also made some recent attempts at approaching these struggles. Cf. the report from the 13th Congress of the CPI-M in *People's Democracy* (1989), pp. 15, 18, and 22.
36. For a fine overview, see Omvedt (1982) in *Land, Caste and Politics* (1982) which also includes other interesting contributions to this discussion.
37. Cf, for example, Mohanty (1987), and (1988?), Kaviraj (1986) and (1988), and frequent analyses and reports in Lokayan, for example Lokayan (1984), pp. 1-17. I also draw on discussions with particularly Mohanty, 1987 02 26-28 and 1988 02 09-11, Harsh Sethi, especially 1985 01 21, and Partha Mukherji, 1988 11 16.
38. For example: Before the emergency, Mrs Gandhi's electoral strategy included the combination of various minorities, tribes, and scheduled castes on her side. These then felt threatened and Mrs Gandhi tried instead to exploit Hindu sentiments. Various minorities, the Sikhs for example, then employed more communalism to stand up against New Delhi, which in turn both spoke about the need to uphold a unified nation state, and also offered protection against Hindu extremists and, implicitly, against itself.
39. *FEER* 1988 12 15.
40. Vanaik (1986), p. 63.
41. See eg. Banerjee (1988); I also draw on interviews with especially Santosh Rana, 1985 03 03, D. Bhattacharya, 1985 02 23, Banerjee, 1985 01 19, 1985 01 29 and with Navlakha 1985 01 19.
42. For a general discussion see e.g. Basu (1987), various contributions in *The Non-Party Political Process* (1983), (Sethi's overview also in Sethi (1984a), Sethi (1987), and for a "re-thinking of Communist perspectives" e.g. Patankar (1985).
43. According to the leader of the most "liberal" Naxalite groups, Santosh Rana, "our support for civil rights movements is *pure, pure* tactical". Interview 1985 03 03.
44. Omvedt (1985) and (1986).
45. In addition to already mentioned references, I am thankful for valuable discussions on this topic with knowledgeable colleagues at the XIII Indian Social Science Council Congress in New Delhi, 14-18 November 1988, workshop on State, Society and People's Movements. (The initial role of political brokers should not be forgotten, see Barik (1988).)
46. Omvedt (1986), Cf. eg. Omvedt (1989), for a discussion about the importance of female labour, and Omvedt and Rao (1984?) about rural women's mobilisation.
47. See eg. Datar (1983) and Patel and Bakshi (1983).
48. See eg. Omvedt (1986) and (1987).
49. For an overview, see Sethi (1984a) and (1987).

50. I am thankful for fruitful discussions with Nalini Nayak, 1985 02 08 and 1987 07 21, and with John Kurien, 1985 02 04 and 1987 07 20. Cf also the analysis in Basu (1987).
51. Vanaik (1986), pp. 62f; see also *Science as Social Activism* (1984).
52. Further references will then be added. For the time being see Sethi (1984a) and (1987).
53. Rajni Kothari is the most outstanding and reputable of them, see e.g. Kothari (1983) and (1986) and Kothari (1988). I am also indebted to Bipan Chandra for fruitful discussions, 1985 03 15 and 1985 03 19, about the dilemma for the leaders of the post-colonial state who wanted to fight religious communalism and caste etc, had to do this though state interventions, and had few alternative community organisations to turn to, and who therefore brought in the state from the top-down. Asok Mitra (1985) has also written well about the contradictions (in Bengal) between voluntary organisations and the state in a historical perspective. *Frontier*, vol 17, no 29 and 30 about old and new NGO activity in Bengal.
54. On the NGOs in Indonesia, see first Törnquist (1984a) especially pp. 28-31. For recent developments I also draw on communications at the Conference on State and Civil Society in Indonesia, Monash University, Melbourne, November 26-28, 1988, particularly with Herb Feith; The magazine *Inside Indonesia* has also during the last few years carried a series of presentations on various dynamic NGOs in Indonesia.
55. "In the Koran the pilgrimage is mentioned in one verse only, but social justice in twenty-three verses." Interview with Babib Hirchim, May 1984.
56. Eldridge (1987) distinguishes three levels of co-operation between the state and NGOs. The first is to co-operate in official development programmes while seeking to influence their design and implementation in more participatory directions. The second is to look for protection from above while trying to mobilise from below. The third approach is to have minimal contacts with the government when not needed in order to negotiate. Autonomy and mobilisation from below is stressed and often carried out in quite informal ways.
57. *Tapol,* no 91 Feb1989, no 92, April 1989, *FEER* 1989 03 09 and 1989 04 06.
58. Törnquist (1984a), especially pp. 12 f.
59. HKTI, *Himpunan Kerukunan Tani Indonesia.*
60. The new acronym is BAKORSTANAS.
61. *Tapol,* 66, Nov 84., p. 15.
62. Ibid.
63. Goderbauer (1989), p. 22.
64. For a general analysis of the conditions of the workers in the plantation sector, see *Landarbeid in Indonesie* (1988).
65. Goderbauer (1989), p. 22.
66. *Tapol* 92, April 1989, *Inside Indonesia*, April 89, p. 23.
67. *FEER* 1989 04 20.
68. *FEER* 1989 04 06.
69. *Tapol*, no 84, Dec 87, p. 4.
70. See at first hand the reports in *Tapol,* no. 82, Aug 1987, no. 83, Oct. 1987, no. 84, Dec.1987, no. 85, Feb. 1988, no. 91, Feb 1989 and no. 92, April 1989. For a recent report in *FEER*, see 1989 04 06. See also *Kedung Ombo* (1988).
71. Local officials had, for example, tried to pay off a protest leader with 25 million rupees. *Tapol*, no.83, Oct. 1987. p. 12.

72. *Tapol*, no. 93, June 1989 and *Tapol*, no. 94, August 1989 as well as personal communication with journalists who visited the area.
73. *Tapol*, no.84, Dec. 1989, p. 24.
74. Cf. Lane (1989).
75. *FEER* 1989 04 06, 1989 04 20, *Tapol*, no. 92, April 1989.
76. Basavapunnaiah in interview 1985 03 16. In relation to democracy within the Party he added in another interview 1985 03 18, that "strategy is something for the generals, not a mass question. One-fourth of our members do not even understand the essence of the party programme, the basic theories."
77. Off-record interview with leading CPI-M member, 1985 03 05.
78. EMS in interview 1985 03 14. Municipality elections finally took place about a year later. The Left won with an extremely tiny margin.
79. See the analyses of the election figures in *Frontline* (1987), particularly the cumputer analysis in *Frontline*, April 18-May 1.
80. Törnquist (1987); I am particularly thankful for valuable discussions with Michael Tharakan, 1987 07 20, Nalini Nayak 1987 07 21, John Kurien 1987 07 20, Thomas Issac 1987 07 21, Govinda Pillai 1987 07 20 and 23, and Richard Franke 1987 07 22?
81. For the results, see *People's Democracy* (1988).
82. An increasing nervousness was obvious at the CPI-M's headquarters in the autumn of 1988. Discussions with Basavapunnaiah and Prakash Karat, 1988 11 13. For the more recent development I am most thankful for comments from Michael Tharakan, Thomas Issac, John Kurien, and Govinda Pillai 1990 01 09-11.
83. Mitra (1979).
84. See for example Nadkarni (1987) especially Ch 5 and 6, Rudra (1985a), B.M. (1987) and (1988), Dhanagare (1986) and (1988), Krishnaji (1985), and Chattopadhyay et al. (1982); I also draw on interviews with Ashok Mitra, 1985 03 05, D. Bandyopadhyay 1985 03 16 and Budhoyan Chattopadhyay 1985 02 26.
85. Rudra (1985a), p. 4 (drawing on Utsa Patnaik). Dhanagare (1986), p. 96 would even have it that 91 per cent of the marketed surplus comes from about 10 per cent of the farmers with holdings of ten acres or more.
86. Stressed not least by the then Minister of Finance in West Bengal, Ashok Mitra, Interview 1985 03 05.
87. For references see at first hand under the sub-section about new Communist lines above. In the following paragraphs I draw extensively on interviews with Basavapunnaiah 1985 03 12 and 1985 03 18, Harkishan Singh Surjeet 1985 03 14 and 1985 03 18, Balaram 1985 02 03, E.K. Nayanar 1985 02 04, Rama Krishna 1985 02 05, Mathew Kurian 1985 02 07, Prabat Patnaik 1985 03 21 and Biplab Dasgupta 1988 11 17 who I confronted with the vital arguments of their critics and then noted their most important points of defence.
88. Most CPI-M leaders did not find it difficult when I sometimes used the term "*kulaks*" instead of "rich farmers" or just "farmers"; they sometimes did it themselves. CPI's Balaram, however, found it repulsive and "corrected" me directly. Interview 1985 02 03.
89. Basavapunnaiah in interview 1985 03 12.
90. Interview 1985 03 14.
91. I draw at first hand on a manuscript by Omvedt and Gala (1987), p. 5. A short version was later published in *Frontier*, Omvedt and Gala (1988) and (1988a) and a similar one in *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Omvedt (1988a).

92. Omvedt and Gala (1987), p. 5f.
93. Ibid., p. 8.
94. Ibid., p. 12.
95. Ibid., p. 7.
96. Ibid., p. 8 f.
97. Ibid., p. 11.
98. Ibid., 12ff.
99. Ibid., p. 14.
100. Ibid., p. 15, Cf also Omvedt (1988).
101. Rudra (1988). Cf. also Sharad Patil's reactions on Omvedt (1988), Patil (1988), (1988a) and (1989) as well as the debate between Omvedt and Balagopal in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Balagopal (1987), (1987a), and (1988); Omvedt and Galla (1987b) and (1988b).
102. Rudra (1988), p. 9.
103. Ibid.
104. Ibid., p. 10.
105. Rudra (1988), p. 9.
106. Ibid., p. 10.
107. For a summary of the conceptual exercise, see Athreya/Böcklin /Djurfeldt/Lindberg (1983). See also Athreya/Djurfeldt/ Lindberg (1990).
108. Ibid., and also Athreya/Böcklin/Djurfeldt/Lindberg (1985), p. 5.
109. Ibid.,
110. Rudra (1988), p. 10 f.
111. Ibid.
112. Athreya/Böcklin/Djurfeldt/Lindberg (1983), p. 24. See also their new book (1990).
113. Balagopal (1987a), p. 2178.
114. Banaji (1978), p. 356 f.
115. The food is not that cheap, by the way. Most poor people cannot afford to buy what they need.
116. Rudolph and Rudolph (1987).
117. See C.T Kurien's review article (1988), pp. 1472 f.
118. The internationally most well known book is Boeke (1953).
119. The internationally most well known book is probably Geertz (1963).
120. For a fine analytical review article of the debate, see White (1983).
121. See, for example, Franke (1972), Gordon (1978), and Palmer (1978).
122. See, for example, the writings of Frans Hüsken, Benjamin White, Rudolf Sinaga and Gunawan Wiradi referred to in Törnquist (1984).
123. See at first hand the extensive writings of William Collier; References in Törnquist (1984).
124. For a fine recent summary of some of these results, see Hüsken and White (1987), pp. 3-10. Some of the best studies include Breman (1980), Knight (1982), and Elson (1984).
125. Wiradi, Manning, and Hartoyo (1984); cf. also Wiradi and Manning (1984) on eight of the villages.
126. Wiradi, Manning, and Hartoyo (1984), p. III: 20
127. Ibid., p. IV: 8.
128. Ibid., pp. III: 3 ff. and p. III: 22.
129. Ibid.
130. There are of course huge differences between upland and lowland villages. But even in the lowland villages the figure is as low as 26 per cent. Ibid., p. IV: 5.
131. Ibid., pp. IV: 31 ff.
132. Ibid., pp. IV: 3-11.

133. Ibid., p. II: 7.
134. Manning (1988), pp. 72 f.
135. Manning (1987).
136. White and Wiradi (1987), p. 26.
137. Ibid., p. 28.
138. Ibid., p. 28f.
139. Ibid., p. 34.
140. Ibid., p. 33.
141. Hüsken and White (1987).
142. Ibid., pp. 17 f. In "his own" village Hüsken, however, stresses the importance of adjusted sharecropping or contract labour relations. See Hüsken (1983) and (1988).
143. Cf. my remarks in Chapter one and the section where I evaluated the Communist theses, especially sub-section five.
144. Cf. also C.T. Kurien's (1988) criticism of the Rudolphs' low cut-off point which is similar to White and Wiriadi's — one hectare. In my view it is, however, easier to defend the lower cut-off point in the framework of the more densely populated and intensively farmed Java than in the Indian situation.
145. See Hüsken and White (1987), White and Wiradi (1987) as well as Manning (1987).
146. Cf. my argument in Törnquist (1984) that the main problem of agricultural development in post-colonial Java was not the concentration of land into big semi-feudal or capitalist holdings, the so-called un-reformed agrarian structure, but rather that many of the existing peasants on small holdings were lacking sufficient resources. These resources have been forwarded by rentiers and financiers within the New Order state.
147. Hüsken and White (1987), pp. 13 ff. For example: Not least the huge oil revenues made possible a developmental spending per year of about 300 US $ for every Indonesian household during the high period. About 20 per cent of the development budget was allocated to agriculture during the seventies.
148. Comparatively free co-operatives, for example, are no longer permitted. Cf. Hüsken and White (1987), p. 12.
149. Hüsken (1988) and Wolters (1988), drawing on Deere and De Janvry.
150. Elections become increasingly rare and popularly elected village representative councils have been replaced by appointed "Social Security Institutes".
151. For a fine case study of this, see Zacharias (1983).
152. This is not even done in Hart (1986) where she specially features the state.
153. This argument was more extensively discussed in Törnquist (1984a).
154. See for example, Hart (1986), Schulte-Nordhold (1981) and (1987), Schiller (1986) and (1988), Fox (1988) and Antlöf (1989).
155. Törnquist (1989a).
156. Kothari (1983), pp. 28-30. Cf Kaviraj (1984) who is more eager to stress a crisis of political institutions.
157. Feith (1988), talk given at conference given on State and Civil society in Indonesia, Monash university November 25-27,1988, and private communication. See also interview with Feith in *Inside Indonesia*, No 19, July 1989 p. 4.
158. Frank & Fuentes (1987), pp. 1503 f.
159. Ibid., p. 1505.
160. Ibid., p. 1509.
161. Patankar (1985?).

162. For a straightforward analysis of this kind, see Karat (1984) and (1988).
163. Karat (1988), pp. 57 and 64.
164. Ibid., p. 14, for example.
165. Ibid., p. 16, for example.
166. Ibid., p. 10.
167. Ibid., p. 30.
168. Ibid., pp. 13 f.
169. For a recent concrete example, see the conflict between the Left Front Government in Calcutta and the tribal population in not least north east West Bengal.
170. Karat (1988), pp. 45 ff.
171. Ibid., p. 65.
172. An argument frequently bought forward by frustrated and since long hard working social and political activists within as well as outside established left parties and movements.
From this point onwards, where I am adding to or refining supplementary arguments within the framework of the two main ones, I draw on my attempt to follow the debate particularly in India and Indonesia, not least by way of communicating with activists and scholars.
173. Cf. Petras (1989).
174. For example the late Mathew Kurien, 1985 02 07.
175. Interview with e.g. Nalini Nayak 1985 02 08.
176. See eg. Dhanagare and John (1988).
177. One interesting example is the failure of the farmers' movement in Tamil Nadu to transform itself into a political party. Discussion with Staffan Lindberg 1989 04 26.
178. For a particularly exciting and pioneering discussion in another concrete framework, the Chilean situation, about the neglected strategical aspects, see Parra (1989).
179. See *People's Democracy*, June 25 and July 2 as well as the Chinese analyses published in several of the following issues.
180. I am aware of attempts by, for example, Habermas, Anderson and others to solve the problems but agree with Frankel (1983) that they all start from the problematic assumption that a basic distinction is possible.

PART II

WORKERS' STRUGGLE

The role of workers is crucial for all political Marxists. Communists in the industrialised capitalist countries used to accuse other labour leaders of compromising with bourgeois forces, of employing short-sighted reformism, and of trying to make use of "the capitalist state apparatuses". The actual importance of the Communist ideas was, however, rather limited, especially as compared to the social democrats.

In South and Southeast Asia the traditional positions were often the reverse. Non-communist labour leaders usually maintained that industrial capitalism had to develop before radical socialist changes were possible. Meanwhile they emphasised defensive political and unionist workers' actions, which rarely became politically decisive. Many Communists, on the other hand, spoke about the weak level of industrial development, and the imperialist character of capitalism and its linkages with feudal-like agrarian structures. Consequently, workers could not do much on their own. There was instead a need for collaboration with many other classes and social groups, including not only peasants, but also progressive capitalists, as well as leaders working from within the state apparatuses. For long periods of time, strategies like these proved politically more fruitful than the unionist ones.

Communist ideas of progressive capitalists and the state as driving social forces were taken as the point of departure in the first volume of "*What's Wrong with Marxism?*", while political approaches emphasising the peasantry have been analysed in the present volume.

However, the more recent expansion of capitalism in the Far East in general, and the popular resistance against it, has given birth to important new ideas about labourers in general as the driving social force. These ideas should also be studied.

The aim of the following chapter is to critically examine some basic aspects of this new approach. What do experiences from recent

labour resistance in Indonesia and India tell us about possible theoretical and analytical problems?

I will limit myself to the study of two cases of labour resistance which have often been put forward as significant illustrations of the new trend: firstly, the wave of labour protests and strikes which emerged in Indonesia during the late seventies and early eighties; and secondly the huge Bombay textile strike of 1982.

Within the framework of these two cases my analysis of the new approach will be restricted to an examination of those aspects of the new ideas about contradictions under the contemporary expansion of capitalism which differ sharply from the conclusions previously arrived at on the basis of the studies of Communist-led political struggles in relation to capitalists, the state, and peasants. Hence, I will discuss the fruitfulness of these new Marxist ideas by contrasting them with my alternative way of interpreting the labour protests in Indonesia and the Bombay textile strike.

CHAPTER 5

LABOUR UNREST IN JAVA, THE BOMBAY TEXTILE STRIKE, AND THE ROLE OF THE STATE

THE NEW IDEAS AND THEIR BACKGROUND

It is necessary to discuss the background as well as the new ideas in somewhat more detail before turning to the concrete cases of workers' struggles in Indonesia and Bombay.

Indonesia

The background

Plantation workers were among those deeply involved in the Indonesian struggle for national liberation.[1] There were also huge strikes in the early fifties, led mainly by Communists. Repression was hard. The PKI was isolated and paralysed, and a new strategy of conditional co-operation with the so-called national bourgeois forces was employed and served as a way out.

This strategy paved the way for impressive Communist advances, but also for serious problems, which I have discussed in Volume One and in the first part of this book. What were the main implications for workers' struggles?

When a new cabinet "led by national bourgeois forces" took over in early 1952, most of the important labour unions were led by Communists. They now made the strikers return to work, or to withdraw their threats of strike action. The proletariat was the most revolutionary class, according to the new PKI-leaders, and its interests should be instrumental for the long-term goals of the party. But the working class would not be capable of implementing socialism in a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country. The workers should therefore forge an alliance with the peasants, based on their mutual anti-feudal

and anti-imperialist interests. The workers would be helped by the peasants' struggle against the feudal landlords, who blocked the development of a national economy with more industrial production, more jobs and better wages. The workers should also make common cause with the so-called national bourgeoisie. While the unions should, of course, safeguard the basic interests of the workers, according to the PKI, these two classes had a mutual interest in the struggle for a national and independent economy. The nationalists would also allow the trade unions democratic rights and freedoms. Included in the new tasks of the unions was to help raise production in state-owned companies. Foreign-owned companies, on the other hand, could afford to raise wages. In the long run they should be nationalised.

Actual developments proved, however, that the so-called national bourgeois' interest in democracy was not reliable. Workers' actions had to be very limited. Thus, while workers may have contributed to the breaking up of the colonial economy, no national and independent economy emerged to create more jobs and better wages. The economic crisis became worse and worse. Those who could not grow their own food and had little but their labour to sell were hardest hit.

Although the workers were instrumental in the huge nationalisation of foreign owned companies which began in 1957, it was the military, politicians and bureaucrats who took over the economic powers of the old managers. This was in addition to their previous military, political and administrative powers. Their positions were reinforced by a state of emergency, which was justified by the need to fight imperialist aggression. New rent-capitalists emerged.

Given the PKI's theoretical perspectives and strategies, the Communist-led workers were inevitably domesticated. Radical protests would have been labeled "threats against the nation", and would have undermined president Sukarno's possibilities of offering his loyal allies, including the Communists, some protection. Enhanced struggle against imperialism and for the nationalisation of foreign-owned companies — as well as campaigns against privatisation of state property — did not pose a threat to the new rent-capitalists, who proceeded to take control over the companies from within the state apparatuses. Formal privatisation was not necessary.

New perspectives

During the heydays of the PKI, the so-called most revolutionary class— the workers — was thus left behind. The "New Order" regime that

followed virtually eliminated the labour movement in general and the Communist-led unions in particular. A brutal period of economic recovery followed, which, although engineered by the so-called Berkeley mafia of US trained technocrats, was actually led by the rent-capitalists who had emerged during the late fifties and early sixties, and whose positions were now undisputed. With their increased bargaining powers, they could now develop extensive co-operation with domestic, as well as foreign, private capitalists, and with "donor" agencies, banks and governments.

In the late seventies and early eighties, a new discussion started on the importance of workers' struggle. Government and business analysts had to address problems of increasing labour unrest. At the same time, attempts were made by concerned scholars and activists to develop new perspectives and analyses of the situation at this period of time. Their main arguments were as follows.[2]

Firstly, until this time Indonesian dissidents had been preoccupied with issues such as corruption and dependence on foreign capital. These had mainly been the intellectual exercises of dissident students. The result was liberal middle class disaffection. Intellectuals had developed various theories, about a bureaucratic, or authoritarian, or neo-patrimonial capitalist state. This state was also parasitic, retarding economic and social development in general — and private careers in particular. The recommendations of the intellectuals had been technocratic, rather than political, and radical dissidents had not paid much attention to how people were being exploited. According to the scholars and activists in favour of a new approach, this old tendency was now being totally bypassed by the many labour protests and strikes that begun to appear in the late seventies.[3]

Secondly, those in favour of a new approach maintained that these labour protests were the result of recent rapid industrialisation. There were many new factories, employing a new generation of young workers. Furthermore, many of these new industries were export-oriented, and in order to promote exports there had been a fifty per cent devaluation of the *rupiah* in late 1978, drastically reducing the real wages of all workers.[4]

Thirdly, the attempt to develop a new perspective gave priority to conflicts between workers and capitalists. This, in turn, was obviously related to the then quite popular rejection, among international radical scholars, of the old dependency paradigm. Actual rapid economic growth, particularly in the Far East, indicated that

capitalist development was no longer blocked by imperialism. On the contrary, economic development went hand in hand with more open third world economies. Some of these scholars joined Bill Warren in his plea for "imperialism as the the pioneer of capitalism".[5] Others were more hesitant saying that we were witnessing a kind of dependent development. The result of improved technology, modern transportation etc., which had now made possible a so-called new international division of labour.[6] Certain developing countries no longer had to specialise in the production-for-export of cheap raw materials (within the old international division of labour), but could now turn to the export of, among other things, labour intensive industrial products. More and more people in countries like Indonesia were being affected by commercialisation, they were proletarianised, and transformed into labourers. Consequently, they were subject to direct or indirect capitalist exploitation. As a result of this it was now labour rather than the peasantry (vis-à-vis landlords and imperialists) or the so-called national bourgeoisie (vis-à-vis landlords, compradors and imperialists) who were the driving social forces.

Fourthly, the new arguments included references to the importance of the state. For example, proletarianisation, regulation of the labour market and the need for cheap industrial labour required repressive state interventions. It was however maintained that the workers rarely faced the state in their daily work and during their regular protests against the foremen or the capitalists themselves. And even if the Indonesian state could draw extensively on its new rents on oil, in addition to taxation etc., the very basis of state power was the capitalists and their production. The workers were thus the only social force that could strike and sabotage production — and thereby undermine state power.

Fifthly, nobody maintained that a coherent industrial working class had yet emerged in Indonesia. Capitalists could often divide and rule their workforce. But activists noted that permanently as well as temporarily employed workers understood perfectly well that they had more in common with each other than with management; and even if many labourers were "only" proletarianised and then indirectly exploited by capitalists, there were no absolute barriers between these proletarians and the new industrial workers. They were all being negatively affected by the expansion of capitalism.

These arguments led to attempts at further developing old trade unionist ideas. The unionist issue became a new rallying point both inside and

outside Indonesia. Communists and Socialists, Christians and Muslims could work together. However, clearly formulated strategies were still lacking.

In the early eighties nobody denied the fact that the regime was involved in the formation and control of the approved unions and their confederation within the private sector. However, most of the progressive activists also maintained that there were some possibilities of working within these unions, at least informally and on the grassroot level. These activists usually formed independent local movements, which were then screened, institutionalised, and "adjusted" as local branches within the approved confederation. Any attempt to form alternative formal organisations would have been like raising a banner telling the regime that "look, here we are, come and crack down on us".[7]

Furthermore, all the concerned scholars and most activists agreed on the fact that very little if anything could be done among the state-employed workers and civil servants. These were not even allowed to join a yellow union, but were instead being forced to rally behind a corporative organisation for all state employees (KORPRI), headed by the minister of interior.[8]

Finally, everybody knew of course that if the approved union or the local management was not able to domesticate the workers, the management could just call upon the local organs of the state to send out police or appropriate army units. Or they were welcome to give a ring directly to the then "minister of manpower", Sudomo, who was former head of the national security command. Strikes were *de facto* forbidden. The official doctrine was that the relations between the manager and his labourers should be like between a father and his sons. And one should not talk about workers (*buruh*), but instead use the term functionaries (*karyawan*).[9]

Different points of view appeared on how to tackle this situation. Most of the non-co-opted formal and informal labour leaders in the early eighties belonged to a new, young, and historically inexperienced generation. On the other hand, they had no hangups in the form of loyalties to old leaders and doctrines. Most of the labour protests which emerged in the late seventies were within new, modern units, and truly locally rooted.

This did not prevent some of these leaders from seeking guidance among those of the old generation who had upheld their integrity. This latter group contained no former Communists, these having been eliminated or pacified. There were, however, some leaders who had

previously been attached to the non-communist-led unions which hand not been prohibited directly after 1965, and which had been aligned with the former Socialist, Christian, Muslim, and Nationalist parties.[10] These unions, and most of their leaders, were domesticated and co-opted during the late sixties.[11] In 1973 they were forced to join the only approved confederation. But some individuals were "stubborn"; among these, some former Socialists stressed the training of cadres and the importance of planned actions as against "risky spontaneous activities", while others were more "open-minded".

However, the former unionists could rarely rely on their old networks. They had been active before the many new industries were built. The old leaders with integrity were also very few, while most of the activists were new and young, and worked, formally or informally, more or less on their own on the shop floor level. Some of them were related to old Socialists; others were open-minded and seemed to be prepared to co-operate with anyone who was not co-opted. This did not mean that they were entirely without informal networks. For example, they got in touch when they were looking for legal aid against the regime.

To my knowledge, almost all new leaders during the early eighties claimed that they tried to give priority to very concrete issues such as wages and other benefits. Much energy was spent trying to defend jobs during the recession some years later. The general idea was that by taking up specific concrete issues, the workers would realise that in order to make progress, they would also have to struggle for the right to organise.

It should also be mentioned that the issue of collective labour agreements was not agreed upon as a rallying point in Indonesia. The common argument was rather that the collective agreements which could be fought for, had to be settled on the factory level, and tended to isolate workers within different units of production from each other. Some claimed also that collective agreements could easily be used to press down wages to an equal minimum level.

Finally, the new activists generally seemed to give priority to work within the new, modern, relatively large units, where it was comparatively easy to unite labourers despite different employment conditions, ethnic backgrounds etc. In larger, more profitable units, it was also said to be easier to come to terms with local managers. They wanted to prevent disturbances in their modern processes of production, and thus were more hesitant to call upon the army. Most of the new leaders were rooted within these units. "We are fully occupied with our

own problems and cannot give priority to contacts with others outside the gates. The best we can do is to demonstrate good examples which others may follow."[12]

India

The background

The Communist strategies which were adopted after independence in India were similar to the PKI's. During a brief period in the late-forties, the Indian Communist Party even tried an ultra-left line of general strikes and urban insurrection against the Congress Party government. The failure was absolute and the repression harsh. (The then General Secretary, the late B.T. Ranadive, was until his death recently still active within the Politburo of the CPI-M, and in charge of the trade union front.) But it was only when the party-led armed anti-feudal peasant revolt in the former princely state of Hyderabad had come to an end in the early-fifties that a new general line of conditional co-operation with so-called national bourgeois forces was employed. Precisely as in Indonesia, the basic idea was that workers, still relatively weak, had to subordinate their long-term "objective" interest in socialism to the interests of the far more powerful peasants and capitalists in anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggles.

The main problems involved in applying this understanding of the driving social forces were analysed in Volume One and in Part One of this book. Here I will examine what happened on the workers' front.

On the one hand, India was more industrialised than Indonesia, and there were more wage workers to organise. On the other hand, the Communist-led unions were less predominant in India than in Indonesia, with the exception of some strongholds such as West Bengal, Kerala and to a certain extent Bombay. Most of the other parties, and the Congress Party in particular, also ran important unions and confederations. Besides being politically led, all unions had one thing in common: they rarely organised rural labour and workers in the so-called informal sector.

No drastic domestication of workers, similar to what happened in Indonesia during the late fifties and early-sixties, emerged in India. (And fortunately, the massive repression in Indonesia during the mid- and late-sixties is still unique.) Attempts to restrict the right to organise and strike were serious. The repression of the 1974 national railway strike, the tight labour policies during the 1975-1977 state of emergency, and

the harsh regulation of capital-labour relations in Bombay are just some of the well known examples. But in a comparative perspective, the democratic room for manoeuvre for Indian unions was nevertheless rather wide and stable.

Also, while Indonesian labourers were especially hard hit by the breakdown of the colonial economy — since it was not replaced by an emerging national economy, but first by a long and deep crisis and then by the more recent brutal and rapid capitalist development — similar problems in India were less drastic. A quite independent national economy, including industrialisation, developed in India and has still not been as drastically replaced by brutal and more dependent capitalism as it has in Indonesia.

It is nevertheless within the framework of this more convoluted restructuring and expansion of capitalism that experiences and analyses have emerged which have given birth to ideas about labourers as a new driving social force also in India.

Towards new ideas

To begin with, the development of these ideas may be contextualised with reference to problems of industrial development and workers' struggle in the Communist strongholds, especially in West Bengal.

When the Communist Party split in 1964, the old Communist-led All-India Trade Union Congress, AITUC, remained with the CPI, while the CPI-M formed its own Centre of Indian Trade Unions, CITU. The CPI came quite close to the Union Government of Mrs. Gandhi, even during the years of emergency.[13] The CPI-M, on the other hand, took a more militant stand. From a minority position on the workers' front, CPI-M-led unions in West Bengal even joined radical Socialists in Calcutta in the initiation of so-called *gheraos* — the encircling of plant owners and managerial staff. Labour relations in West Bengal in general and in Calcutta in particular were very strained.[14]

The Congress Party lost to the Janata-coalition in the 1977 Lok Sabha elections, and in West Bengal the Left Front came to power after successful state elections. Thereafter, CPI-M-led workers' struggles became more cautious.[15]

As we know from Part One, the CPI-M gave priority to the peasants' struggle, agrarian reform, and the development of rural local democracy. But, according to the party, not only peasants would benefit from this. Even the most radical workers needed a strong Left Front

Government, and this required an extended and stable electoral base within the majority of the population. Agrarian reforms would also help rural labourers to improve employment conditions, and many poor people would no longer have to migrate to the overpopulated cities. This would give some relief to Calcutta in particular. Finally, development in rural areas would lead to increasing demands for industrial products, which should result in generally better conditions, especially for urban wage labourers.[16]

In relation to urban and industrial development, large-scale industrialisation was the responsibility of the Union Government. Since New Delhi was rarely in favour of Communist-led state governments, the latter were often abandoned. Besides supporting small scale industry (which was within the area of responsibility of the states), a radical State Government could do little but trying to attract substantial large-scale investments.

The Communists therefore found it necessary to establish the best possible relations with capitalists based in West Bengal, and even with foreign companies interested in making new investments. Most industries were in a deep crisis. There was a need to save as many jobs as possible and to pave the way for restructuring and fresh investments in socially acceptable forms.

> When the Central Government or the Congress (I) controlled State Government goes in for a joint venture with a Capitalist, they do it in the interest of the Capitalist. . . . But when the Left Front Government, standing in the midst of financial constraints, moves in for a joint venture with the intention relieving the problem of unemployment, that venture is a qualitatively different, careful agreement, after fully protecting the interest of the working class. . . . We cannot build up an alternative socialist industrial system for this state. . . . We have to remain within the present framework. . . . When the co-operation of the central government is not available, is there any alternative to building up large industries without the help of domestic and foreign monopoly capital? . . . The alternative is not to take any initiative for industrialisation of this State, make the State a desert which the central government wants.[17]

Because there was now a Left Front Government there was, according to the Communists, no longer any need for serious contradictions between government and workers.[18] The government

would help establish a decent balance of forces between capitalists and workers. Conflicts between capitalists and workers should be negotiated— so that capitalists would find reason to develop production, and so that the workers would receive the best possible conditions. Actions like the previous *gheraos* must be abandoned. Radical workers should also prevent the sabotaging of production and public service by politically hostile unions.[19]

The result was problematic.[20] The exodus from rural to urban areas was reduced, but as I have shown in the first chapter of this book, the lot of the agricultural workers has not been substantially changed, and rural economic development has not created demand sufficient enough to stimulate industrial production. The CPI-M often stated, for instance in relation to "the terrible unemployment problem and the problem of industrialisation", that "there is no basic solution . . . without a fundamental change of the social system."[21]

Development support from New Delhi has been as meagre as predicted.[22] Neither has the attempts of the State Government to attract private capitalist investment been particularly successful. The frequent sickness, lockouts, and closing down of various units has rarely been due to continuous workers' actions.[23] Labour unrest actually decreased drastically.

All this naturally led to widespread dissatisfaction in the urban areas. In the national general elections in 1984 the CPI-M faced humiliating defeats in the industrial areas.[24] The Calcutta municipal elections were postponed for many years. When they were finally held in mid-1985, the Left made some gains as compared to the above mentioned national election, but won with an extremely tiny margin.[25] The defensive line of the workers' front had resulted in stagnation in terms of membership and activity within Communist-led unions, while politically hostile unions had got a new lease on life.[26] Critical voices had appeared within the Left itself. More man-days had been lost due to lockouts than because of strikes. Everybody agreed that strikes in seriously sick units were no solution. But all units were not about to close, and dissidents argued that militant actions were the only weapon in the hands of the labourers.[27] Also, the radical unions continued to have very weak support among women, among non-permanently employed labourers in general, and within the so-called informal sector.[28] All these problems also seemed to place the CPI-M and the Left Front in a weak bargaining position vis-à-vis the unions. Responsible leaders as well as dissidents indicated that it was politically difficult to demand more discipline and responsibility for efficiency etc.

among civil servants and workers even in sectors where "reliable unions" were in control.[29] Ideas such as workers taking over certain units and running them as co-operatives, were, as usual among most Communists, regarded as politically as well as economically unfeasible.[30] Finally, some concerned political-economists maintained that the Left had to shift some priorities, and emphasise large-scale industrial development, if necessary in co-operation with private capitalists, in order to create jobs and regain the confidence of the working class as well as other urban employees.[31]

Problems in the other Communist stronghold, Kerala, have been of a similar nature. In the mid-and late-sixties, militant worker struggles were given more priority, especially within the agricultural sector. (Industry is very weak in Kerala.) But, as I showed in Chapter One, contradictions between labourers and peasants led to divisions within the Communist-led movements which had to be reconciled. Capitalists who faced unusually well-organised, radical, successful workers, seemed to prefer putting their money either outside Kerala or within trade, commerce, real estate or other areas where workers were less radical and less well organised than within production. As in West Bengal, the trade union movement was on the defensive.[32] Civil-servants and their unions have also had a strong position, but rarely seem to have used it in order to promote efficient democratic rule in the public sector.

The new Left Front Government in Kerala tries to emphasise policies in favour of the development of production, in addition to peasants' and workers' struggle for a fairer share of the pie. This requires more efficient state and co-operative initiatives, which in its turn presupposes democratisation. It is too early to say whether these new attempts will be consistent and successful. As I have already hinted at in Part One, capital is lacking, the local capitalists are mostly speculative, New Delhi was, at least until recently, far from generous, and many powerful vested interests are threatened, including within the Left itself.

An alternative approach

The most common Left-oriented reactions to the crisis on the workers' front have thus been to either stress policies in favour of industrial production, or to suggest militant workers' struggles. Both ideas presuppose some revision of the overall priorities. Agrarian transformation and peasants' struggles are very important, but more room is also needed for industrial development and for workers' actions.

In the late-seventies and early-eighties, a new generation of labour-oriented concerned scholars and activists suggested more radical approaches.[33] In their view, the problems of the established Left unions were many. They suffered from paternalistic forms of leadership. Their lack of unity was conspicuous, and almost all of them were related to different parties. Workers' interests were thus subordinated to often quite narrow-minded party politics. And so on. But the basic problem, according to this critique, was that the contradiction between capital and labour had been set aside, and that it had, generally speaking, been seen as a conflict only between industrial workers and their employers. The contradiction between capital and labour was instead not only basic but also decisive in the society as a whole. Capitalism had expanded to such a degree that commodification and accumulation affected most Indians. The concept of labour must therefore be broadened. There were many working classes — industrial workers, labourers within the so-called informal sectors, agricultural labourers, child labour, houseworkers and many more. The capitalist project included proletarianisation. The project of the Left must therefore be to approach all labourers and to work in favour of their unity — the emergence of one working class. Labourers of different kinds struggled against the specific ways in which they were directly or indirectly exploited by capital. There was no rigid dualist labour system.[34] Labourers fought within various processes of production as well as within the sphere of reproduction. The existing unions should strive to go beyond narrow question of specific employment conditions and thus pave the way for unity with labouring people outside the factory gates. Internationally, the case of *Solidarnosc* and its successful broad but labour-based actions in Poland were often referred to.

Discussions about the new trends on the workers' front which those in favour of the new approach considered promising, stressed joint actions among different sections of the labour force. These ideas were not articulated by established unions or party-based mass organisations, but by so-called politically autonomous, labour-based issue-oriented groups in specific areas. For example, the case of immigrant and local tribal labourers had been linked with tribal peasant demands for autonomy in parts of Bihar; and in Maharshtra, where capitalism was and still is very expansive, broad, and quite independent, co-operation had emerged between various unions of rural as well as urban labourers, including government employees. Some ideological and political

leadership had been provided by a regionally based communist party (the Lal Nishan Party) which rejected parliamentarism as well as the idea of a rural peasant-based revolution.

The workers' struggles in Maharshtra and Bombay are thus of special interest. The Bombay region is both one of the birthplaces and a contemporary dynamic stronghold of Indian industrial capitalism. The textile industry served as a foundation. After independence, a union associated with the Congress Party managed to become the sole officially recognised union; but many other unions were present, and communist-led unions had a strong position within this sector for long periods of time.

However, in the late-seventies and early-eighties workers seemed to have lost all faith in any of the established organisations. Finally, they called for the new-style independent union leader Datta Samant. Samant had departed from Congress-party connections and built up a network of quite successful independent unions in the Bombay area, and these struggles had been rather favourably reviewed by some scholars and activists in support of a new approach to workers' actions. When the huge Samant-led textile workers strike developed, this was often regarded as the beginning of something radically new within the framework of labour struggles in India.

This was a sharp and militant break with the traditional, quite legalistic unionism subordinated to the priorities of political parties. The initiative was shifted from established leaders to the workers themselves within the different plants and on the shop-floor level. Capital in general was confronted, and attempts were made to widen the framework from specific employment conditions to broader issues, and to build alliances with labouring people elsewhere, including in the rural areas.[35]

QUESTIONING THE NEW LABOUR APPROACH

How should the wave of labour protests in Indonesia and the Bombay textile strike be interpreted? The new concept of labourers as the driving social force employs two basic points of departure which I like to question since they are in partial contradiction to my previous analysis of rentcapitalism.

According to the new approach, the two cases of workers' resistance should be analysed in terms of a contradiction between capital and labour which has become crucial, making possible joint actions

against different forms of capitalist exploitation of labour. This is in contrast to my previous results (in Volume One and in the first part of this book) indicating a rent capitalist path to capitalism which seriously modify conflicts between capitalists and labourers.

Firstly, "capital". My earlier results indicate that the ruling class is not only made up of private-capitalists. Most domestic and foreign private capitalists are to various degrees dependent upon and intertwined with rentiers who tend to work from within the organs of the state. These rentiers are in command of both the necessary conditions of production, such as credits, inputs, infrastructure, concessions and licences, and of disciplined labourers, which most private capitalists are in need of and thus have to pay monopoly rent in exchange for. Big business houses, dynasties etc. are usually based on centralisation of capital as an outcome of co-operation between private capitalists and political rent-capitalists — rather than on concentration of capital as a result of extensive competition and development of the forces of production.

One of the main implications of this is that many capitalists are not only rooted in privately owned means of production within separate units of production which are vulnerable to strikes etc.; an analysis of their strength must also include the extreme centralisation of capital, and thus the ability of capitalists to neutralise threats by moving much of the capital between different business sectors.

Another equally important effect is that the basis of power of many capitalists includes access to additional conditions of production controlled by their rentier partners from within various organs of the state — sources of power which are not directly undermined by labourers' resistance to different forms of specifically capitalist exploitation.

The first main question to guide my analysis is thus if and how these additional bases of capitalists' power conditioned the workers' protests in Indonesia and the Bombay textile strike.

Secondly, "labour". The new approach emphasises different forms of direct and indirect forms of capitalist exploitation which should contribute to some unity among the labouring classes. However, my earlier results indicate that unification on these grounds is unlikely, since people are also exploited by the appropriation of monopoly rents, and since an insufficient subordination of labour to capital necessitates the extensive use of extra-economic force.

Comparatively few workers are disciplined in direct relation to the processes of production. The use of pure economic force on labour markets, accompanied by additional state regulation, cannot be relied upon to the same extent as within advanced Western capitalism. Most labourers must also be domesticated by the use of extensive extra-economic force.

Firstly, one of the decisive conditions of a production system controlled, traded and invested by political rentiers is precisely their ability to control labourers.

Secondly, in such a system the rentiers do not only demand rent from their private capitalist clients, but also from small producers, petty traders, and even from wage labourers. These political as well as private rentiers are in control of many resources which ordinary people need in order to reproduce their positions, such as housing, access to small scale credits, good connections necessary to get a job, achieve some degree of social security, or the more or less formal permits needed for petty trading. These conditions constitute a good part of the material foundation of personalised dependency relations. They are essential when it comes to controlling of labourers, as they encourage clientelism and are the life-blood of protective religious, ethnic, and caste networks.

The clientelism which follows from this appropriation of rents, as well as from other forms of extra-economic control of labourers, is thus a decisive part of the contemporary expansion of capitalism. These factors obstruct unification among the labourers based on resistance to capitalist exploitation. However, the same factors may also pave the way for common struggle against the rent-capitalist path of development, and in favour of democratisation — i.e. democratic rights and more equal rule of the resources — often public — which the rentiers, as well as their private capitalist partners, use in order to exploit and domesticate people.

The second main question to guide the following analysis is thus if and how these additional ways of exploiting and domesticating labourers affected the workers' protests in Indonesia and the Bombay textile strike.

A WAVE OF STRIKES AND PROTESTS IN INDONESIA

The so-called *Malari* affair in early 1974 is the hitherto most serious threat to President Suharto's regime. In the trial against the main

student leader involved, Hariman Siregar, it was only briefly mentioned that some *becak* (rickshaw) drivers and dock workers had rallied behind dissenting students, Muslims and officers.[36] Labour protests were not decisive in the mid-seventies. The reconstruction and further development of the weak industrial sector was only just under way. In contrast to the economic crisis during Sukarno's last year, there was now a remarkable economic recovery — due mainly to the harsh and effective control of labour, huge new oil revenues, and extensive foreign investments, credits and aid. Real wages even began to reach the standards of the late colonial period.[37] In 1976 the International Labour Organisation reported only six labour disputes in Indonesia, with a total of 1,420 workers involved.[38]

The industrial expansion which had just begun continued rapidly with oil revenues still substantial in the late-seventies. However, they would not last forever. In an attempt to promote the export of other products, the *rupiha* was devalued by fifty per cent in the end of 1978. Already by travelling around outside the gates in Jakarta's industrial areas during some few days in early 1979, when the effects of the devaluation had reached the workers, could I literally see how strikes for compensation emerged.

At that time intellectual dissidents privately suggested that the strikes which I had witnessed should be analysed as part of a conflict between leading generals, some of whom may have mobilised workers against other generals.

Soon enough however, it became obvious that most of the strikes and protests were non-co-opted and led by informal young leaders. In addition to wage issues, many strikes and protests were also about general employment conditions, humiliations, and the right to organise. This was quite remarkable. Open protests, not to speak of strikes, were and are an extremely serious business in Indonesia.[39] Despite this, the 1980 *official* figures were as high as 198 strikes, with 21,660 workers involved.[40] This wave of worker resistance against capitalist production continued for some two or three years.

To my knowledge there were few if any long-term strikes and protests in individual companies. Thus, the capitalists rarely had to neutralise workers' resistance by moving capital between different units and business sectors. Their ability to rely on access to additional conditions of production in general — and the possibility of controlling labour in particular — was, however, decisive, as was the domestication of labourers through personalised dependency relations.

I will discuss this in relation to what happened within small units, the broadly defined public sector, and the large-scale private companies. I turn finally to the ways in which workers responded to the employers' offensive.

Small Scale Units

The domestication of labourers outside of modern production was of utmost importance. The rapid capitalist development in Indonesia had actually made more and more labourers stay outside of direct conflicts between capital and labour. This may be illustrated by some rough indicators.

The ratio of increase in employment in tertiary compared to the manufacturing sectors was extremely high in Indonesia. More than eighty per cent of the new employment for women created during the late-seventies, for example, was within trade and services.[41] The growth of output within manufacturing was 3.8 per cent per year between 1961 and 1971 with an employment elasticity of 1.48. But when output increased to 12.3 per cent between 1971 and 1980, employment elasticity was only 0.33.[42] In 1961 one could find 73.3 per cent of the employed within agriculture, 5.8 per cent within manufacturing and 16.5 per cent within trade and services. But in 1980 the figures were 55.5 per cent, 8.6 per cent and 29 per cent respectively.[43] In 1977 some forty-five per cent of the labour force were self employed or unpaid family labourers.[44] Some eighty per cent "of the workers in the industrial field" worked in home industries in the late-seventies. Even in Jakarta some fifty to sixty per cent of the labour force was found within the so-called informal sector.[45] And as I shall show later on, the number of permanently employed workers within the dynamic sectors decreased while the number of temporarily employed increased. The way in which capitalism developed in Indonesia during the wave of strikes and protests required about seven or eight per cent yearly economic growth in order not to result in increasing unemployment.[46] But in 1980 the growth rate was close to zero, after many years of about seven per cent growth per year.[47] Furthermore, increasing numbers of women were entering the labour market, and approximately thirty per cent of the population was under ten years of age.[48]

It may be possible to argue that most of the labourers were already subject to capitalist exploitation in various indirect ways, which would pave the way for a unifying struggle against a common enemy. However, only a tiny minority of the Indonesian labourers were involved in the wave of strikes and protests. To my knowledge,[49] there were very few (reported) strikes and collective protests within small units, including the rather many sub-contracting firms, where most members of the working class were and are employed.[50] There was also little or no involvement from the employed and/or self-employed within the so-called informal sector, where an absolute majority the non-agricultural labour force as a whole resides. Much of the discontent among the majority of the labourers was presumably —, and unfortunately —channelled through other kinds of conflicts, such as the extensive anti-Chinese riots which took place in Central and East Java in late 1980.[51]

I thus find it hard to believe that this majority of labourers which did not join the wave of resistance chose to stay out due to only market forces, and subordination to capital within production. On the contrary, extensive use of extra-economic force is also likely to have been put to use. The importance of state interventions, usually under the command of political rentiers, in order to control labour can hardly be overstated and will soon be discussed. But one should not underestimate the less spectacular role of personalised dependency relations between rentiers cum patrons and their clients among labourers and their families.

State Controlled Units

Neither were there many actions among the huge numbers of people employed by the state.[52]

The state could command different capacities. Initially, public servants seem to have been relatively well compensated for the inflation.[53] In addition to this, strikes were, of course, not allowed. When, for example, the public bus-drivers in Jakarta and some Garuda airline pilots went on strike in 1979 they were replaced by military drivers and air force pilots.[54]

Also, any kind of unionism among public servants was strictly prohibited. This category encompassed not only those employed within the armed forces and civil administration on all levels, but also all employees within wholly or partly state-owned units, as well as workers in private companies in which an organ of the state had "a share".[55] In addition to state employees, we are thus talking about wage labourers in most of the largest companies in the country, within, for example, oil, construction, transportation, and agricultural estates. All these public servants belonged instead to the Public Servants' Corps of Indonesia, KORPRI. (Those who were not permanently employed were,

however, often left out in the cold.) KORPRI was a kind of welfare organisation with the aim of increasing the servants' dedication and loyalty. Its structure ran parallel to the state hierarchy. The Minister of Internal Affairs was head of KORPRI, and at the local level the leading bureaucrat or manager was also the official leader of the employees. (One of the few options for workers on state-owned plantations — as long as they could find other alternatives — was to refuse employment when the wage offered to them was too low.[56]) KORPRI was also affiliated with the party of the regime, Golkar. (After 1985 Golkar is, formally speaking, no longer a corporative party. The public servants are instead strongly advised to become individual members.[57])

Large-Scale Private Units

Most of the workers who were involved in the wave of strikes and protests were instead employed within private, relatively large modern units. How did the capitalists handle these conflicts?

To begin with the employers relied both on their own economic strength, as well as on additional extra-economic force in order to create a loyal staff and a reliable group of quite few permanent labourers as against an army of temporary workers. The loyal staff and the permanent employers were effectively subordinated to capital, and thereby possible to control primarily by the capitalists themselves. The temporary workers, on the other hand, had to be domesticated by use of extensive extra-economic force.

Divide and rule

During the Sukarno period, many staff members were active union leaders who did not necessarily rally behind their employers.[58] During the New Order, on the other hand, they were usually prohibited from joining the few authorised unions which were still allowed in the private sector. Staff personnel did of course also complain. But usually they did not want to risk their important privileges, including relatively good schools for their children, free medicine, good connections within Golkar etc., by confronting their employer.[59]

During the Sukarno period unions fought quite successfully against lay-offs and for the right of all workers to be permanently employed. During the late-seventies and onwards, however, the employers within the large-scale sectors were quite successful in getting rid of unprofitable workers. Within the *batik* industries, for example,

the labour force outside Jakarta had decreased by about eighty per cent since 1970.[60] Meanwhile, the real wages had at best been constant, while output increased by some 7.5 per cent annually.[61]

However, the most important tendency was perhaps that the employers already had begun to drastically decrease the number of permanent workers and to increase the amount of wage labourers who could be dismissed the very day they were no longer profitable.[62]

To begin with, permanent employees were carefully screened and tested. These labourers were usually skilled and/or strategically important within the increasingly mechanised processes of production where everybody is a vital link in the chain.[63]

The permanent employees were thereafter better paid than unskilled temporary workers, with a wage difference sometimes as high as 250 per cent.[64] But the extra benefits, the social and employment security etc. which the permanent workers received were even more important. In addition, most employment contracts were individual. The turnover among permanently employed workers was thus relatively low, some five per cent according to the World Bank.[65]

The non-permanently employed workers, on the other hand, were also divided by their masters into probational, casual, seasonal, contract, sub-contract, non-wage or family workers.

The probationary labourer was meant to be a trainee with low salary for a short period of time. But there were cases when they had worked for the same capitalist for as long as thirteen years.[66]

Many of the casual labourers were *de facto* permanent day labourers. But they were less expensive than permanently employed labourers and were easier to get rid of during a recession or when they protested. Semi-official figures show that almost half of the dismissed labourers between 1973 and 1981 were accused of union activities.[67] And the first to be thrown out during the recession which hit Indonesia from 1982 and onwards were usually the non-co-opted unionists.

Seasonal labourers and contract labourers were mainly used on plantations etc. However, contract workers were also very common within construction and in similar sectors. They were even more frequent in areas where there was a shortage of labour, at least in peak periods.

There were also more and more sub-contracted workers, i.e. those employed for specific periods by a broker who thereafter sold the workers on contracts basis, perhaps to a logging company or a plantation. This system was often used in the outer islands where there

was a constant lack of labour. When sub-contracted, the workers were for the most part *de facto* forced labourers.[68]

There were also non-wage employees. Some hotel servants, for instance, did not get any wage at all but had to live on tips only.[69]

It was, finally, quite common for plantations, for example, to expect the children of employed mothers or fathers to assist without special pay.

Extra-Economic Preconditions

This brief review is not to suggest that there were absolute barriers between labourers with different employment conditions. But the employers did their utmost to divide and rule, and it is important to understand the preconditions for this strategy. As we shall see, extra-economic force was employed in order to divide and rule the labourers. Once this had been accomplished, it was sustained by preventing labourers from uniting. And when the non-permanently employed labourers had no jobs they had to be controlled elsewhere.

Firstly, the employers relied extensively on the capacity of their contacts within the organs of the state to control labour.

On the one hand, those in command of the state operated indirectly. They had eliminated the popular movements in general and the solidly based, radical unions in particular. They had not only prevented unionism within a very broadly defined state sector but also severely restricted workers' rights to organise within the private sector. They had enforced one single, tightly supervised confederation of, generally speaking, domesticated unions, the FBSI (the All-Indonesia Labour Federation).[70] (As a matter of fact, even the FBSI was further disarmed in 1985 and renamed SPSI, the All Indonesia Union of Employees. Member unions were brought together, new union officials were appointed, a new chairman was "elected" etc.[71]) Strikes and other forms of protests were, of course, *de facto* forbidden. Instead, so-called *Panca Sila* (farther-son) labour relations were enforced and taught in various courses for union leaders and young labourers — with financial support from, among others, the World Bank and the West German Social Democrats.[72]

There were many reasons for why the wave of strikes and protests ran aground. One is that the economic recession in the old industrial countries reached Indonesia around 1982, causing a lot of close downs and lay-offs in badly hurt sectors such as textile, cloves and cigarettes, durable consumer goods (e.g. motorcycles) and construction.[73] This, in turn, decreased the market bargaining power of the labourers.

However, another, and I would suggest equally important, factor was that the capacity of those in command of the state to control labour had drastically improved. In March 1983 the head of the National Security Command (then called KOPKAMTIB), Admiral Sudomo, was made "Minister of Manpower", and the former head of BAKIN (the intelligence), Sutopo Yuwono, became his Secretary General.[74] The very same month a second drastic devaluation (this time 27.6 per cent) was implemented. But, despite the lack of compensation, there was no new series of resistance. Naturally, some collective protests and strikes took place, and it was easy to underestimate the amount of clashes because of additional media-restrictions. But in 1984 nobody denied that the labourers had been forced to retreat; generally speaking, the downward trend has still not been altered.[75]

According to the new "Minister of Manpower", Admiral Sudomo, strikes were "certainly allowed by the law (i.e. in "non-vital" factories, O.T.) but many people do not read the full text of this law which, by the way, is not yet operational, because the measures necessary for its implementation have not been taken. And for sure I will not give permission to strike."[76]

In addition to this, the state also helped to keep down the wage level, occasionally all too effective. The management in modern units sometimes found it difficult to buy off strategically important labourers in order to keep up production.[77] Finally, workers in different units of production were prevented from communicating with each other, and journalists were "asked" not to report on labour conflicts.[78]

On the other hand, various organs of the state were constantly prepared to intervene directly if the already mentioned more indirect measures had not been sufficient. Labour relations had been increasingly militarised since 1979.[79] In addition to this it was quite common that retired — and sometimes even still active — officers took up positions as, for example, personnel managers, while soldiers and policemen often worked as guards and watchmen.[80] And as soon as protesting labourers could not be effectively handled at the local level, the manager called the police and /or the local army unit.

When Admiral Sudomo was still head of KOPKAMTIB he ordered direct military intervention in labour conflicts, and enforced a so-called early detection system, to detect and prevent labour disputes. This was done in co-operation with the "Ministry of Manpower", the

Chamber of Commerce and Trade (KADIN), and the FBSI.[81] When, in 1983, Sudomo became minister, he further developed this system and established a "manpower crisis management centre" within the ministry "to resolve a conflict of interest between management and labour before the conflict turns into open crisis; to localise the conflict and encourage both sides to go to the negotiation table . . . and if it turns into a crisis, to prevent it from spreading." There were two levels, the policy making centre and the action force group. The task of the latter was "to prevent a dispute from spreading and to cope with the dispute at the spot."[82] Finally, Sudomo ordered all local organs of his ministry to report labour problems to him daily by telephone or telex.[83]

As I have already indicated, the more "efficient" state interventions contributed to the decline of worker strikes and protests. Some non-co-opted leaders tried to prevent the extensively repressive direct military interventions by turning from strikes to slow downs, for example.[84] However, I was also told that the police and army intervened in more cautious actions as well, and management was less prepared to negotiate with the non-co-opted leaders who were still present at the local level.[85]

Secondly, less harsh, but often equally as efficient personal dependency relations were also employed in order to control labour.

The employers obviously tried to make use of domesticating ideologies and institutional arrangements in the local neighbourhoods. For example, Celia Mather has shown that the workers in the Tangerang district, west of Jakarta, staged much less militant and conscious actions than their comrades in, among other places, the area between Jakarta and Bogor.[86] Her explanation is that the workers in Tangerang were extra-economically subordinated both within and outside the factory gates by, among other things, contractors, informal supervisors in the surrounding villages, and by the Muslim ideology. It is illustrative that in the Jakarta area itself there was a clear concentration of strikes within the Pulogadung Free Trade Zone.[87]

To this should be added the frequent employment of young and unmarried women. Just as with young men, these women rarely had financial responsibility for a whole family. Also, many girls tended to look upon themselves as temporary workers, who did not have to fight for a better future as workers, but as wives.[88]

The Workers' Response

How, then, did the workers in general and their leaders in particular, respond to these measures? On the whole, they did not, as we shall see, try to fight against the decisive extra-economic subordination, but instead retreated into an increasingly narrow trade-unionism.

Originally, the disputes were of course mainly about general demands for higher wages, allowances etc. There were frequent actions in favour of leaders dismissed during the process of conflict. But there were also many cases where temporary labourers asked for benefits similar to those of their permanently employed comrades.[89] This caused some divisions among the working class as a whole, even if most of the workers in the strike-ridden companies were involved. However, it is my impression[90] that the main effect of the capitalists' measures was a tendency towards the defence of primarily the more or less permanent workers in relatively large-scale and modern units. This trend became even more important during the recession from about 1982 and onwards which caused a lot of close-downs, lay-offs etc. Those who had the chance to defend themselves were the skilled workers — with some bargaining power on the labour market — and the workers within modern and vulnerable processes of production — with some bargaining power at the workplace.[91]

"The workers are prepared to do a lot of things", said a well informed scholar and former activist, "but they cannot afford to lose their job. And next to that they give priority to demands for better payment. Struggles for the right to organise, goals of a broader unity among the working class, etc. are left behind."[92]

This was emphasised by the fact that the FBSI tended to concentrate on the more or less permanently employed workers.[93] The non-co-opted leaders at the local level, on the other hand, had no chance to form alternative unions. When they mobilised workers, the local unions were usually taken over, or at best carefully watched, by the FBSI, which in turn was supported by management and the various organs of the state. When the alternative leaders had to demonstrate that militant actions were worthwhile anyway, they sometimes had to give even more priority than the FBSI-leaders to workers with the best bargaining power.

Thus, the already tiny minority of Indonesian labourers who could stage collective actions against their exploiters and oppressors thereby became even narrower.

Unions were present only within very few companies,[94] and usually dominated by men. According to a study in two East Java towns, ninety per cent of the female workers had never even heard of the FBSI.[95] Also, some fifty per cent of the labour force as a whole were youth between ten and fourteen years of age,[96] who were even less likely to be unionised.

Finally, and most importantly: the main ways of subordinating the labourers — by employing extra-economic powers — were thus avoided by the activists. This is not to suggest that labourers should have tried to tackle the army and the police head on. But while the different direct and indirect capitalist forms of exploitation did not provide a basis for broad and unifying actions, I suggest that the general importance of additional ways to exploit and domesticate labour indicate that there nevertheless was, and is, a non-co-opted basis for common struggles for political rights and democratisation — i.e., struggle for some popular democratic space and less unequal rule of the usually-public resources which rentiers, as well as their private capitalist partners, continue to rely upon.

Instead, latent discontent among Indonesian labourers was channelled mainly through religious, ethnic, and regional movements.

THE BOMBAY TEXTILE STRIKE

In late-October 1981, the workers in eight Bombay textile mills went out on strike to protest against a bonus agreement between the millowners and the Congress(I)-led RMMS (*Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh*), the only textile trade union which was recognised within the framework of the Bombay Industrial Relations (BIR) Act. Many of the workers marched instead to the residence of Datta Samant, an independent and militant union leader outside the textile sector, to demand his leadership. Samant accepted and formed a new union, the *Maharashtra Girni Kamgar Union*. His attempts at discussion with the millowners and the government to settle a reasonable agreement were in vain. Other unions tried to intervene in order to take over from Samant but failed. On January 18,1982, a total and indefinite strike of close to 250,000 Bombay textile labourers began. The demands were mainly economic — higher bonuses (especially in more profitable units), wages, and allowances — but also included permanency for the casual labourers.

Most left parties and unions felt threatened and bypassed by Samant, but had to at least pay lip service to the workers. Only the regionally based communist Lal Nishan Party and its trade union wing (*Sarva Shramik Sangh*, including the textile union *Kapad Kamgar Sanghatana*), as well as some few small groups, mobilised all their resources and gave top priority to the strike which offered a possibility for them to advance and to promote radical political changes.

No strike funds were available. Most workers turned to their rural place of origin in order to survive. Others had to find alternative incomes in the urban areas. The activists tried to organise base level activities.

After six months only some seven per cent of the workforce had returned to the mills. No serious proposal was offered by either the millowners or the government. The leaders of the strike added political demands: the exclusive recognition of the RMMS union, as well as the BIR-Act, must be altered. This also was bluntly refused.

During late-Autumn, more labourers resumed work. But as late as one year after the total strike had started, the quantity of production was still no more than forty per cent of the normal figures. During the Spring of 1983 the strike petered out, although Samant refused to declare that it was over. Huge rationalisations were introduced. A lot of new workers had been recruited. Many of the old workers never returned. Some 50,000 labourers were dismissed. In 1984, the support for Samant was still broad enough to get him elected to the union parliament, but when he declared a one-day strike in October 1985, it was a total failure.

My question is if and how the strike was conditioned by, firstly, a capacity of the capitalists to move capital and production, as well as to rely on extra resources provided by the state; and, secondly, by factors such as state or clientelistic control of labour outside of production?

Labour vis-á-vis Centralised Capital

While the individual strikes and protests on Java lasted only for short periods of time, the textile workers in Bombay were out on strike for about one year. How could the millowners survive a massive attack of such a long duration?

To begin with, a strike for a month or so would have been almost a blessing for the millowners. The demand for their products was,

generally speaking, stagnant or declining, while there was a desperate need for modernisation of most of the mills. The strike thus made it possible for them to get rid of huge stocks, as well as unprofitable labourers, without having to pay retrenchment benefits.[97]

However, even though priority was given to the domestic market as against export,[98] the surplus stocks were not enough to meet one year's domestic consumption demands.[99] Despite this, there was no important shortage of textiles and cloth, and the prices remained stable under the duration of the strike.[100] The main reason for this seems to have been that the capitalists could move capital and production between different centralised units and business sectors, thus saving their assets and meeting the most urgent production demands.

This centralisation of capital had existed for many years, and was even one of the basic reasons for the general crisis of the textile mills which had led to the already mentioned and initially so important huge stocks and inefficient production.

Although almost two-thirds of the private mills in Bombay were controlled by nine big business houses,[101] neither production nor the market was monopolised.[102] About one-fifth of all Bombay mills were state-owned.[103] In most cases, however, competition had not led to investment aiming at more efficient, and thus also cheaper, production. There were of course exceptions, but many mills were actually "museums, or worse, graveyards of machinery".[104] Not to mention the working conditions. Productivity had stagnated, while increasing dramatically within the textile industry in most other parts of the world, including in third world countries.[105] Even the existing machinery was often underutilised.[106]

On the one hand, this was partially due to government policies, including the defence of the hand and powerloom[107] sectors, and tight regulations of modernisation schemes within the mills. On the other hand, many capitalists within the textile mill sector had — often in co-operation with well-placed public administrators — transferred non-official profits to more dynamic and less regulated sectors both within and outside of textiles, as well as to other ventures where this kind of black or at least grey money could be used.[108] Union struggles in defence of jobs, as well as in favour of small-scale sectors "against monopoly capitalists", also contributed to this state of affairs.[109] (Any developmental-social-democratic trading of modernisation and rationalisations in old sectors against alternative jobs, and perhaps even more jobs, in new sectors was of course quite unlikely both for

ideological reasons,[110] and because the unions were much too weak and divided to be capable of enforcing and supervising such a deal.[111])

In addition to this transferring of capital out of reach of the militant textile workers, the ability of the millowners to move production was also of utmost importance. Production could be shifted from, for example, a state-owned mill in Bombay to public units elsewhere in India, while the state was the largest owner of textile mills in India,[112] but generally speaking it was nevertheless the small powerloom units which benefited most from the strike.[113] This sector had been on the increase for many years, due in part to favourable state regulations, and to the largely unorganised and low-paid labour force. During the strike, the millowners sub-contracted vital parts of their production to the powerloom units. It is difficult to say exactly how important this was, but it is undisputable that the strike was related to an expansion of the powerloom sector.[114] In the early eighties, almost fifty per cent of textile output originated from powerlooms, with nine out of ten powerlooms actually controlled by the millowners. Some ninety per cent of the turnover value was financed by black money.[115]

The workers were not able to put up much against this capacity of the employers to move capital and production. Datta Samant once mentioned that the mills could be nationalised and then operated with workers' cooperation, but nothing was done with this idea.[116] (The possibility of worker occupation of productive units, and perhaps attempts at carry on production under their own leadership, do not seem to have been even thought of; such ideas did not belong to the tradition of radical union struggles in India.[117]) Turning to what actually happened, I will instead first discuss Datta Samant's methods and then turn to the isolation of the strike.

Datta Samant began organising workers in the late sixties. It was mainly after the years of emergency-rule that his non-political but economically very radical and anti-legalistic trade unions became *the* attractive alternative for most Bombay workers.[118] While he did not always deliver the goods — for example, only about one-third of the work stoppages in 1981 were successful, and almost half of the workers involved returned to work without benefits[119] — his militancy was consistent. Even though he sometimes lost, he did not betray anyone, and some of his victories were quite impressive. The reasons for why this was possible include the fact that his original followers included young, skilled workers within independent plant-level unions in modern, comparatively capital-intensive industrial sectors like

engineering and chemistry. Generally speaking the demand for these products was great, the production processes were vulnerable to work stoppages, the labour component was much lower than within textile mills, and the increasing costs of labour could often be won back by making production more efficient or by increasing consumer prices. The market and workplace bargaining power of the labourers was thus quite high, and many individual capitalists found it necessary to settle deals with Samant, preferably related to the increasing of production.[120]

Interestingly enough, one of the main reasons for why textile workers begged Samant to lead them in the end of 1981 was a favourable agreement recently won by Samant and his followers in one of the modern and profitable mills (Empire Dyeing).[121] However, the textile mill sector was, generally speaking, quite different: labour-intensive production, depressed market conditions, an abundance of workers, and a tradition of united and resourceful millowners who were at times even eager to support the only officially authorised union within textiles, the RMMS.[122] It was difficult for Samant to split the millowners by offering them different agreements according to their capacity to pay. Owners of more or less sick mills did not want to pay at all, and got the support of the state for their harsh line, while owners of profitable mills both did not mind getting rid of their sick mills as a result of the strike, and could not afford to challenge the state and run the risk of losing favours after the strike.[123] Datta Samant's old tactics were thus out of context — something which some claim he was well informed about (but never told his followers[124]) at an early stage, by his communist predecessor as radical textile-labour leader, S.A. Dange.[125]

In addition to these problems, Samant and his followers paid little attention to the necessity of widening the strike by hitting at the supplementary basis of the millowners, i.e., in the factories where they had invested their profits from textiles, and in mills which took over production from Bombay, as well as in the powerloom units.[126] Samant was never very interested in co-operation with other unions, and other radical union leaders did not exactly support him either. Not even as early as in April 1982 — and not even in Bombay — was, for example, a brief general strike in support of the textile workers successful.[127] In addition, unionism was generally weak in the vulnerable dynamic modern sectors, as well as in the powerloom sweat-shops, where millowners had put most of their money. But to my knowledge, Samant did not even give priority to the mobilisation of his own unions in the modern sector. (Samant led some 5,000 unions with

about 1.5 million members in Bombay and the industrial area around Thane-Nasik-Pune.[128]) When he finally stated in late September 1982 that the strike must be spread horizontally,[129] this was not followed by dynamic action. And as late as 1986, Samant claimed that the workers in the powerlooms could not be organised since they were very dependent upon their exploiters.[130] As a matter of fact, many of the textile mill workers who had to survive during the strike took up new jobs in powerlooms which were sub-contracted by millowners.[131]

State Backed Capitalists

Even if, for example, some bureaucrats and politicians were involved in helping millowners to transfer non-official profits from the textile sector to other ventures,[132] such relations were of course less revealing, tight, and decisive in India than in Indonesia. I refer to these as quantitative differences;[133] however, many scholars and activists, whom I consulted in 1985 about the Bombay textile strike, anxiously stressed that they were qualitatively different. In their view, the Indian Union and State Governments functioned within a capitalist framework and were thus bound to side with the millowners rather than with the workers. But aside from such typical or normal standards, there had been no significant state interventions, neither in order to domesticate the labourers nor in order to back up the capitalists. Generally speaking it had instead been a straightforward conflict between capital and labour. Economic powers, in terms of huge stocks and an abundance of labourers, had simply made extra-economic interventions unnecessary.

I will return shortly to the role of the state in controlling labour, after examining state support — or lack thereof — to the capitalists.

In partial contradiction with the "everything is different view", other colleagues revealed facts suggesting that the reasons for why the capitalists had been able to hold out for such a long period of time actually included decisive state support.

To begin with, some twenty per cent of the mills in Bombay were managed by either the Union or the State Government. In addition to this, Communist labour leader G.V. Chitnis emphasised that the government must support the millowners because otherwise it would have to pay higher wages to the employees in all the other one hundred and six publicly owned mills in India as well. This was confirmed by a senior minister of the State Government, who said that his administration was restricted by the Union Government, which feared repercussions in other mills in the country.[134]

Secondly, Kumar Ketkar, senior economic and labour reporter with *Economic Times of India,* added that the main and decisive role of the Union and the State Governments — besides their contribution to the control of labourers, to which I shall return — had been their active prevention of individual agreements between millowners and Datta Samant by way of promising all possible support to the millowners, especially to further modernisation, as soon as the strike was over. During the middle of the strike the Union Secretary of Labour, B.G. Deshmukh, had even told Ketkar quite clearly that the millowners had "the blessing" of the Union Government, while the Union Minister of Commerce, S. Patil, had limited himself to the hinting at similar facts.[135]

This is further supported by van Wersch's findings. Even before the general textile strike broke out, Rajiv Gandhi was among the influential persons in New Delhi who had suggested that the State Government should initiate a High-Power Committee in order to look into the complaints of the labourers. The millowners, however, managed to convince the Union Government that wage increases would be disastrous for the private, as well as the public, mills.[136] And as late as in January 1982, just before the full scale strike broke out, Samant claims that he was offered and agreed to a settlement[137] suggested by an authorised Union Government representative[138] — which was then turned down in Delhi.[139]

Moreover, immediately after the strike broke out, the millowners sent a delegation to brief Mrs. Gandhi and to ask for credits and funds in order to carry out modernisations.[140] According to R.N. Joshi, general manager of Shree Ram Mills, the government's position during the strike was that "we will back you up to the hilt and after the strike all kinds of help will be given to you in order to come back to the normal."[141] The Prime Minister herself had just talked about the need to work harder in the "Year of Productivity" when the Bombay strike broke out, and she was on the offensive against militant trade unionism, with various harsh restrictions against strikes and other actions. Also, the government in Maharashtra was incapable of acting independently of the Union Government, and the comings and goings of ministers during Mrs. Gandhi's frequent government reshuffles — in the states as well as in New Delhi — further undermined the autonomy and capacity of her subordinate politicians.[142]

The close cooperation between the Union Government and the millowners continued during the strike as a whole. Only the new Minister of Commerce, the former Prime Minister V.P. Singh, caused

some problems when he, in early 1983, announced that he was willing to make fresh attempts at settling the strike. This was a golden opportunity for Samant and his activists to win an honourable compromise. But the millowners and the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra rushed to Delhi and Mrs. Gandhi, and successfully convinced her that the strike was petering out anyway and that concessions would thus be a mistake.[143]

When the strike was definitely over, the Union Government first nationalised thirteen sick private mills in late 1983. This was a setback for the owners who had planned to close down and make an handsome profit by selling the land.[144] On the other hand, a new textile policy was introduced in mid-1985 which gave the millowners almost everything they had asked for in terms of less regulations and support for modernisation.[145]

The State and Control of Labour

The role of the state in controlling the Bombay textile labourers was not at all as decisive, and especially not as harsh, as in Indonesia. There were of course many cases of police interventions, brutality, harassments and so on,[146] but this was comparatively unimportant in relation to the repression employed against the Indian railway-workers during their general strike in 1974.[147]

However, certain less obvious, though still significant, tendencies were nevertheless present in the case of Bombay as well.

To begin with, a general policy of the government had since long been to shoulder much of the responsibility for labour relations, including legislation and schemes for basic protection. Due to the lack of unified unions and collective bargaining agreements, many unions had also emphasised labour-legislation.[148] In the case of the 1982 textile workers strike, this was partly turned against the labourers. For example, the local police were provided with names of militant leaders who had returned to the rural areas in order to survive;[149] in July 1982 the Government of Maharashtra stated that free school books should be distributed to the children of workers who went back to their jobs before the end of the month;[150] and in January 1983 some 169,000 workers lost the benefits granted to them in case of sickness, maternity, and "employment injury" under the so-called Employees State Insurance Scheme.[151]

Most importantly, however, were the attempts of the post-colonial governments to continue authoritarian regulation of industrial

conflicts within the framework of the Gandhian ideas about charitable relations between employers and employees. Bombay even got its own Industrial Relations Act (the BIR-Act) in 1946, which made most militant actions illegal and stipulated that there should be a single representative union in an industry if it was supported by twenty-five per cent of the workers. The Congress (I)-led RMMS, Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh, became the sole recognised union within textiles. Over the years, popular unions have been forced to act outside the gates, and the millowners have tried not to talk to or to settle deals with unrecognised leaders.[152]

Despite the fact that over the years the RMMS had lost most of its popular influence and support to other unions, it has nevertheless proved impossible to legally overturn RMMS. This is not only because RMMS-leaders used their influence within co-operative credit societies and their ability to decide who should be employed on what conditions to turn labourers into their dependent clients;[153] the BIR-Act and the dominant position of the RMMS survived mainly because they were patronised by the Union and State Governments in general and the Congress (I) in particular. During the 1982 Bombay textile strike for example, the RMMS was totally bypassed by the workers, who followed instead the illegal actions of the non-recognised unions led mainly by Datta Samant. But the Union and State Governments refused to deal officially with Samant convincing all millowners to be equally as rigid. In their view, Datta Samant was not only an unrecognised union leader but also a traitor — because he had left the Congress-I-led trade union confederation — and a rebel who had turned against most established forms of union activity and negotiations, including traditional communist schemes. Samant simply had to be brought to his Waterloo.[154]

Thus, as in the case of Indonesia, the Indian state has sucessfully prevented the Bombay textile labourers from organising and freely selecting representatives whom they themselves could empower with the right to negotiate and settle deals. At the end of 1981, the Union Government actually introduced an Essential Services Maintenance Act according to which strikes were banned in a wide variety of so-called essential industries, and police were given the authority both to arrest without warrant "any person who is reasonably suspected of having committed any offence" and "to confiscate properties of a trade union".[155]

Additional Control of Labour Outside Production

In the late-sixties and early-seventies, the Congress(I) had given tacit support to the chauvinist-communal *Shiv Sena* movement in its assault on Communist-led workers' organisations.[156] Thereafter, however, the growing importance of Datta Samant's non-political and non-communal unionism opened the way for actions based on pure economic interest, and, in sharp contrast to the protesting workers in Indonesia, the Bombay textile labourers managed to uphold a united front. It may be true that this remarkable unity — in terms of going out on strike for a long period of time — had more to do with the industry-wide negotiations enforced by the millowners and BIR-Act than with class consciousness. The workers themselves seemed more interested in millwise negotiations which would benefit those employed in profitable units.[157] But while the Act had existed for quite some time, it was a new phenomenon that everybody — including the casual workers and most of the clerical, supervisory and technical staff — went on strike.[158] In addition, workers in comparatively modern, profitable mills were quite willing to come together with labourers in sick units.[159] Van Wersch notes that "one of the noteworthy aspects of this strike was the absence of groupism, be it based on caste, regional origin or terms of employment".[160] Neither did the gradual returning of workers to the factories follow communal lines.[161] And for the first time, the casual so-called *badli* workers, who had the least to lose, even played a leading role in a strike. In addition to payment more closely related to the profitability of the individual firms, the demands of the *badlis* for better and permanent employment conditions was central to the whole collective action.[162]

At the same time, however, the approximately one-year long strike by this huge unified mass of some 250,000 workers — who lived and worked in the heart of Bombay city, who usually came from the nearby rural areas, and who spoke the same language as the majority of the population[163] — did not lead to any kind of general unrest. The textile workers as a group were for the most part unable to link up with other oppressed people, and rarely capable of carrying out collective actions during the strike. In accordance with the conclusions stated in the previous sub-section, the main reason for this can hardly have been excessive state control of labour. The decisive factors seem instead to have been the various dependency relations outside of production — mainly due to the way in which workers without strike funds had to

survive — and that the strategy of Samant and other leaders did not tackle these problems efficiently enough.

In a case study of problems of radical unionism in Bombay during the seventies, Narendra Panjwani stresses the importance of loyalties and solidarity within family, caste and ethnic groups — including those in residential areas.[164] While this may not have prevented textile workers from going out on strike, it may have limited their ability to carry on and extend the struggle. For instance, the father may have been out on strike within the textile sector, but the son, rather than staging a solidarity strike, was likely to work even harder within an engineering factory in order to support the family.[165]

A lot of workers, probably most of them, returned to their villages in the rural areas.[166] Many owned some land. According to a previous study, sixty-four per cent of the factory workers owned more than one hectare, while the casual workers were often landless,[167] often surviving as labourers. Agrarian development had been fairly dynamic in many of the rural districts, and there were also State Employment Guarantee Schemes.[168] Those who owned land were sometimes able to help supporting comrades who stayed in Bombay. But a lot of those who employed labour on their land actually turned against rural labourers.[169] In addition, those who produced cotton for mills in Bombay may not have been particularly happy about the strike.[170]

Especially in urban areas, workers were also able to employ individual strategies in the so-called informal sector. Others found new jobs within the textile sector — including in powerloom sweat-shops subcontracted by millowners who were hit by the strike.[171] Naturally, neither of these sectors offered good opportunities for collective action.Finally, dependency relations were an important factor leading to the resumption of work at an early stage. The Century Mills frequently employed fresh new recruits, and, just as Bombay Dyeing, provided its employees with cheap, reasonably good accommodation which was extremely rare in Bombay, and thus hard for the labourers to give up.[172] Also, the *badli* workers were more dependent than their permanently employed comrades on the patronage of the employees and recognised RMMS union leaders, and thus among the first to enter the gates.[173]

The radical left leaders attempted in various ways to come to grips with problems like these, while also implementing their own ideas about revolutionary change. Firstly, various base-level committees were

formed. This went along with their general emphasis on shop-floor level activity, as opposed to industry-wide mobilisation, while also bringing some organisation to the workers and other downtrodden people in the residential areas. The committees were to organise meetings, actions, collection and distribution of food and money, etc., and of course, help workers to keep in touch with one-another and with the general course of events. Co-ordination would be taken care of by central committees.

Many observers of the strike have stressed the role of these committees.[174] Closer studies reveal, however, that their decisiveness has been overstated. Rather few workers were involved in the committees or even knew about them. Their functioning was loose, formal elections were lacking while many factions were struggling for leadership and influence, and the important work which was nevertheless carried out by devoted activists was undermined and overruled by Samant's despotism and disinterest in organisation.[175] "He flowed with the wind, using the mood of the workers as his only guide", said one analyst adding that Samant was the type of leader who functioned as "a channel through which the grassroot frustrations are being vented".[176] Grassroot unionism on the shop-floor level would thus have required stronger base-level committees — as well as co-ordination between them — than those which emerged during the strike, in order not to promote selfishness.[177] The serious lack of leadership and organisation became completely obvious — and serious — when the Bombay police went on strike on August 18, 1982, and the textile workers were not able to use this opportunity for collective offensive purposes but just plundered and ransacked some visible enemies.[178]

Secondly, radical leaders actively tried to use the exodus of workers to the rural areas to build an alliance between urban and rural labourers. Had this been successful, the Communist *Lal Nishan* party, and other related groups who actively supported the strike, could have developed the strongest base which any radical party had ever had in Maharasthra.[179] Rural tours, including a lot of meetings, were organised with Samant in order to spread information, to mobilise food and money for the workers who stayed in Bombay, to initiate activity and organisation, and to generally promote an alliance between urban and rural labourers. The importance of this has been stressed by several analysts cum activists.[180] No doubt, a lot of work was carried out by devoted activists. Food and money were collected and new militant organisations, including among women and *dalits*, developed, which are still dynamic.

One concrete example is from mid-1983, when the strike was petering out. A *Lal Nishan* party candidate, supported by Samant, several other left parties and the *dalits*, was then able to give the Chief Minister Vasantdada Patil a hard run in a by-election to the Assembly in his own, "safe", central Sangli city constituency, where very few labourers lived.[181] Patil had actively fought the strike, but most issues were local and related to his contribution to the oppression and exploitation of labourers. Farmers who employed labour within the framework of the green revolution were also confronted. Patil had to campaign in Sangli for about a month with the help of many ministers and members of the Assembly, distributing a lot of presents, employing communal and strong-arm tactics, and threatening the voters with withdrawal of development funds if he lost.[182]

Unfortunately however, the fall forwards for the Left in Sangli was of little use for the workers in Bombay, most of whom were then back inside the mills and subject to renewed oppression.[183] Moreover, the rural left sided uncompromisingly with the labourers, and was thus unwilling to join forces against the state with the better-off peasants led by Sharad Joshi, or to relate such a broad alliance to Samant's workers' front in the urban areas.[184] Only much later did some of the scholars and activists rethink their analyses and positions,[185] while Joshi and Samant tried co-operation against the Congress(I). The careful evaluation by van Wersch indicates that the success of the collection campaigns, as well as of the actions, has been overstated, and that "barring a few examples there is no evidence that the strike had a significant impact on the unification of agricultural and industrial labourers".[186]

Thirdly, there were other attempts by the radical leaders to broaden the strike by making it more political. The conflict had started as a narrow bonus issue. Subsequently wage demands had been added, as well as permanency of the *badlis* and increased allowances. Samant had initially been eager not to challenge the political set-up.[187] But as time went by, many leaders became aware of the need to broaden the struggle in order to gain wider support and to influence politics. In April 1982, Samant decided to run in Thane for a seat in the Union Parliament simply on the promise to defend the interest of the workers. He lost by a wide margin, and said it was because many workers stayed in the villages.[188] But as we have already seen, when he turned his attention to the villages, he stood isolated among militant labourers who were unwilling to build broad fronts together with peasants and farmers against the state. This was not the last time that he was politically

unsuccessful. Even though he finally won the Bombay south central seat to the Union Parliament in 1984, his other candidates lost by wide margins, and a few months later only five of his eighty-five candidates in municipal elections were victorious.[189] Samant had little if anything to say about all the other vital issues which were important for downtrodden people in general in addition to wages etc., and could not join forces with other actors; he even ran over his own activists.[190]

Despite the fact that he turned more anti-Congress after the defeat in Thane, and some months later made the strike more political by including the repeal of the BIR-Act in the list of demands, he was still unable to present anything like a political programme, to stage political action among the labourers (who still found the economic demands most important[191]) and other people, or to form union and political alliances. Even his position on the BIR-Act was unclear. He may actually have preferred the comfortable position as the recognised union within the framework of the Act. But he could not apply for recognition since he had declared an illegal strike. To *prove* that the RMMS could not verify at least twenty-five per cent of the textile workers as its members was very difficult,[192] and even if it was easy to label all this undemocratic and to call for a "secret ballot", it was no secret that democratic rule and voting was not exactly welcome within Samant's own unions.[193]

CONCLUDING WORDS

If my aim had been to produce a general analysis of the Indonesian and Bombay cases of workers' resistance, I would of course have began by emphasising the contradiction between capital and labour. I would also, for instance, have stressed that the Bombay textile workers were more unified than ever, that they tried to build alliances with rural labourers, and that there were, under the given circumstances, remarkably many young, inexperienced, and severely oppressed Indonesian workers who were able to start acting collectively.

But this was not the aim, as general analyses are already available. Instead I have attempted to provide a critical appraisal of the new labour approach, focusing especially on its extreme emphasis upon the contradiction between capital and labour, which implied that joint actions against different forms of capitalist exploitation of labour were feasible.

I believe I have been able to demonstrate that the conflicts between labourers and capitalists were seriously conditioned by a series of neglected factors which strengthened the capitalists and isolated and weakened the militant workers.

Firstly, the employers were usually capable of moving capital and production (within the framework of their monopolies based on centralisation of capital) out of reach of the militant workers in certain individual companies. This was less important in the course of the many short actions in Indonesia than during the long strike in Bombay.

Secondly, both the Bombay millowners and the Indonesian businessmen had access to decisive additional conditions of production controlled by partners within various organs of the state, against which the labourers' main emphasis on strikes in their employers' units of production was a blunted weapon. The main auxiliary supply employed in Indonesia was state control of labour, including domestication of people outside "organised" production. This was less significant in Bombay, where state patronage of the millowners proved more decisive, even though relations between the private capitalists and political rentiers were not as manifest, tight, and compelling as in Indonesia.

Thirdly, personalised dependency relationships as a means of controlling labour outside modern production proved crucial in both Indonesia and in Bombay. On the one hand these were used as a supplement to domesticate those employed within the factories. In the case of Bombay, personal dependency relations became particularly important for the striking workers who had to find alternative sources of income in their rural place of origin or in the urban so-called informal sector. On the other hand, such relationships were instrumental in controlling the many other labourers who were not out on strike, including the majority of the labour force which was staying outside direct conflicts between capital and labour, and with which the militant workers thus usually proved unable to build alliances.

My argument is not that capitalist exploitation of labourers has become insignificant due to the vital role of additional state-resources rented out to the capitalists and extra-economic control of labourers, or that the latter factors are remnants of pre-capitalist relations of production which will disappear as capitalism develops — but rather that these "non-economic factors" seem to coincide with expropriation of rents, and with the way in which contemporary capitalism was and is expanding in Indonesia and India.

This implies, firstly, that there are so many different forms of direct and indirect, more or less capitalist exploitation that the unification of labourers against it is seriously obstructed. Secondly, a precondition for a successful labour movement is, therefore, the struggle against the monopolisation of state resources by rentiers and their private capitalist partners, i.e., against the basis for many of their different ways of appropriating surplus from and exercising extra-economic control over the majority of the labourers. Thirdly, while the labourers are unlikely to unite against the various forms of exploitation, they may do so against the oppression and appropriation of rents, which they, as well as many others, are subject to, and which are based on an undemocratic rule of resources that are in principle common property. Fourthly, broadly based struggles for democratic rights and rule may, therefore, also be realistic.

NOTES

1. For the following, until next note, see Törnquist (1984), mainly Ch. 13.
2. For the following about Indonesia — when nothing else is mentioned — I am mainly relying on interviews with scholars and activists in Holland, Australia and on Java during April and May 1984; I was also able to interview some well-informed non-co-opted union leaders in Indonesia.
3. Cf. e.g. Lane (1982), Southwood and Flanagan (1983), and Lane (1982a).
4. Cf. Lane (1982a) and, most importantly, INDOC (1981), (1982), (1983) and (1984).
5. Warren (1980).
6. For a basic work, see Fröbel, Heinrich and Kreye (1980).
7. Cf. INDOC (1981).
8. Ibid. Some old activists hinted nevertheless at the possibility of working within KORPRI.
9. INDOC (1984), p. 15 fn. 53, Leclerc (1972), and Sudono (1977).
10. For example, the Socialist union KBSI, the Nationalist KBM, the Catholic SB/Panca Sila, the Nahdatul Ulama's Sarbu Musi, and the Masjumi's Gasbindo.
11. The approved confederation within the private sector emerged partly out of the ranks of Gasbindo.
12. Non-co-opted socialist oriented leaders, interviewed in Jakarta, May 12, 1984.
13. See eg. Krishnan et al. (1975).
14. See e.g. Ghosh (1981) pp. 67 ff. and Franda (1973), pp. 204 ff.
15. For the following about West Bengal, when nothing else is specified, see Pedersen (1982), Ch. 4.2 and 4.3, Sen Gupta (1979), pp. 142 ff, the writings of Ajit and Biren Roy and Manoranjan Roy's reports.
16. On the rural-urban problem, cf. Dasgupta (1987a) and (1987b).
17. CPI-M (1985), pp. 39ff.
18. For example, according to the Left Front leader and State Secretary of the CPI-M, Saroj Mukherjee, " (i)t would not be meaningful to strike against us...we support the workers. Anyway, there is the risk that factories would close down." Interview 1985 02 20.

19. According to the West Bengal CITU-leader Manoranjan Roy one important case was the attempts to sabotage public transportation in 1981. "We asked the workers to keep up services — and so they did." Interview 1985 02 24.
20. CITU's own reviews are illustrative enough. See for instance Manoranjan Roy's reports (1981), (1982), (1983), (1983a), and (1984).
21. CPI-M (1985), p. 38.
22. For the position of the Left Front Government, see e.g. *A reply...* (1984).
23. Cf. the General Secretary of CITU and M.P. Samar Mukherjee's speech in the Lok Sabha, February 27, 1984 in which he stated, among other things, that the total number of sick units in the country as a whole was increasing dramatically and that, according to a survey by the Reserve Bank of India, "53% of the Units became sick due to mismanagement, including diversion of funds, infighting and lack of marketing strategy, 14% of the Units became sick due to faulty initial planning and other technical drawbacks and 9 % of the Units became sick due to power failures and shortages of raw materials and 23% of the Units were closed due to market recession which belong to engineering, cotton, jute, textiles and sugar industries. The Survey of the Reserve Bank of India revealed the truth that the industries which are closed due to labour troubles or industrial disputes are only 2%." CITU (1984) p. 9.
24. Ajit Roy (1985), Biren Roy (1985).
25. See Biren Roy (1985a) and *Frontier*, July 13 ,1985.
26. See e.g. Manoranjan Roy (1983) and Biren Roy (1984b)
27. See e.g. Biren Roy (1984), (1984a) (I also draw on an interview with Biren Roy, 1985 02 23) and Rudra (1981a).
28. The party itself spoke mainly about the problem of unsatisfactory linkages with the unemployed. (CPI-M (1983), pp. 39ff.) The General Secretary of the West Bengal CITU-Committe Manoranjan Roy maintained that it was the task of the party, not of the unions to reach the unemployed. (Interview 1985 02 24.) The leading Politburo member Basavapunnaiah stated that "we do nothing special to reach the unemployed and unorganised. We must give priority to the organised sector. We cannot give priority to committees among slumdwellers. This would not be an efficient way of using the cadre. One comrade can handle a union with perhaps 1 000 members. But even 10 comrades cannot do much among scattered people in the slum." (Interview New Delhi 1985 03 12.).
However, the united communist party used to be quite strong in the Calcutta slum during the fifties. (Interview with Sumantra Banerjee 1985 01 20, Sailen Das Gupta 1985 01 18 and Sudhendu Mukherjee 1985 02 20). While Banerjee and Mukherjee maintained that the CPI-M thereafter tended to support the middle-class who wanted to get rid of the slum, CPI-M's Sailen Das Gupta argued that in the fifties the slumdwellers were mainly workers and that the Communists contributed in providing them with better conditions. At present, however, the slumdwellers are petty traders and "anti-socials". When I asked for more information on the stand of the party, I was introduced to Prasanta Chatterjee. According to him the party supported popular bustee (slum)-committees among tenants (i.e. those who had benefited from previous struggles against urban landlords). There were no plans to promote cooperative efforts since "we have a friendly government" — the committees should support the measures of the Government. Also, when I asked how the party tried to reach out to those who could not afford to be tenants there was no answer. When I suggested "perhaps at their workplaces?" the conversation was concluded with the comment that these people usually did not have a decent income, and should have stayed in the rural areas. (Interview 1985 02 28.)

29. Interview with Satyabrata Sen 1985 02 20.
30. Interview with Manoranjan Roy 1985 02 21, Bhabani Ratchandhury of the AITUC 1985 03 04, Basavapunnaiah 1985 03 18 ("workers would be responsbile within co-operatives and the conflict between labour and capital would be diluted") and many others. A then decisive leading communist stated, however, that the unions were negligent or at least indifferent. Interview 1985 03 05.
31. E.g. Deb Kumar Bose, Interview 1985 03 04.
32. The General Secretary of the Kerala CITU-Committee K.N. Ravindranath confirmed this, and could even tell a story about a strike in Calicut in co-operation with other unions, in order to help companies to get their inputs. Interview 1985 02 07.
33. For the following, see for instance: Das (1980), Banaji and Subramaniam (1980), (I also draw on a brief interview with Jairus Banaji 1985 01 25), Das, Rojas and Waterman (1981) as well as many of the other articles in *Human Futures*, Vol. 4, No. 4, Waterman (1982), (I also draw on discussions with Waterman and Harsh Kapoor April 1984), Patankar (1982), Pendse (1983), [I also draw on an interview with Pendse 1985 01 25, and Fernandes (1984)], and Bhattacherjee (1988); Cf. also PUDR (1983).
34. Cf. Jan Breman's (1976) earlier criticism of the "informal sector" concept, which had been employed by e.g. Mark Holmström — who later on revised his analysis; see Holmström (1984).
35. For analyses along similar lines see e.g. Patankar (mss.) and (1988), Kapoor et al. (1983), Omvedt (1983), (1983a), (1984), Bakshi (1986), Lakha (1988), and Bhattacherjee (1988).
36. van Dijk (1975), p. 4 f. I also rely on an interview with Siregar, Jakarta, 1984 05 14
37. Papanek (1980), p. 82 ff.
38. This figure, which must of course be very uncertain, is taken from Lane (1982a).
39. More or less hidden forms of everyday resistance were of course even more common — but are very difficult to study and discuss within the framework of a broad comparative project such as this.
40. See the second to the last note above and INDOC (1981).
41. World Bank (1983), p. 38. For the general situation see pp. xvii-iii. For a contemporary international comparison, see Petras (1984).
42. World Bank (1983), p. 42. These figures offer an interesting indication, but are, of course, based on weak statistical material.
43. Ibid. p. 66.
44. Ibid. p. 152.
45. *Annual report...* (1979) p. 25. Cf. also Evers (1980) and Sarthi (1983). I draw also on an interview with Adi Sasono, May 1984.
46. World Bank (1983). p. 131 and Budiman (1983) referring to figures presented by the so-called *Kompas* seminar in 1983 with prominent Indonesian economists, businessmen and other social scientists.
47. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 3, 1984, pp. 94 ff. Since 1980, growth rates have improved but are far from the previous high level.
48. World Bank (1983), pp. 131 and 153.
49. (A) When nothing else is stated in the following on Indonesia, I rely on information from non-co-opted union leaders in Jakarta, May 1984, and
information from non-co-opted union leaders in Jakarta, May 1984, and ~~from~~ scholars and activists in Holland, Australia and Indonesia April-May 1984
50. Of all labour conflicts in INDOC (81-84)
51. For a survey of these events, see van Dijk (198[illegible]
52. [illegible]

53. INDOC (1981), p. 97 and (1984) p. 9. According to Budiman (1983), p. 16 the civil servant wages were, however, not increased in 1982 as had been done in previous years.
54. INDOC (1981), pp. 29 f. and 35f. and van Dijk (1980), pp. 117 ff.
55. About labourers in the public sector, see at first hand INDOC (1981), and also (1985), pp. 17f. Cf. also INDOC (1988), pp. 7-12.
56. According to scholars within the INDOC-collective, April 1984.
57. Those who did not were, to put it mildly, paid special attention to. INDOC (1988), pp. 7f.
58. Interviews with former SOBSI leaders (the Communist-led confederation during the Sukarno period) in Holland, April 1984, as well as with a former minister of labour under Sukarno, Jakarta, May 1984.
59. Interviews with scholars within INDOC, April 1984.
60. See the special report on the *Batik* industry in *Prisma* (1983).
61. World Bank (1983), p. xii.
62. For this topic, when nothing else is mentioned, see in particular INDOC (1981), pp. 119 ff., Mather (1983), the article on plantation workers in the special issue of *Newsletter on International Labour Studies* (1983), (in which, among other things, it is mentioned that that there were about 280,000 plantation workers in North Sumatra in 1965 but only 120,000 in 1978), and World Bank (1983), pp. 101 f. I also draw on interviews, see the last note above beginning with capital (A).
63. World Bank (1983), pp. 101 f. Cf. also Yoshi (1980).
64. World Bank (1983), p. xv.
65. Ibid. pp. 101 f.
66. *Human Rights...* (1980), pp. 59f.
67. This was according to the FBSI, the authorised trade union confederation; quoted from INDOC (1982), p. 5.
68. For a survey of sub-contracted workers, brokers etc. see INDOC (1981), pp. 127 ff. and (1983), pp. 27 ff.
69. INDOC (1981), p. 53.
70. For the creation of FBSI, see ibid. part two.
71. INDOC (1988), pp,13 ff.
72. (B) INDOC (1981), p. 81 and ibid (1984), p. 10. I also draw on interviews with scholars in close contact with this education, Jakarta, May 1984.
73. INDOC (1983 and (1984) and *Inside Indonesia* no. 1-3, 1984. I also draw on interviews with Dorodjatun and prof. Sarbini, Jakarta, May 1984, and with Anne Booth and Peter McCawley, Canberra, May 1984, as well as other interviews mentioned in the note above beginning with capital (A).
74. INDOC (1984).
75. See for instance INDOC (1988), p. 21.
76. Quoted from INDOC (1984), pp. 8f.
77. INDOC (1981), p. 70. I also draw on the interviews mentioned in the last note above beginning with capital (B).
78. Cf. INDOC (1984), p. 9. See also the last note above beginning with capital (A).
79. Well documented in INDOC (1981) and in the following up-dates.
80. INDOC (1983), p. 18 and ibid., (1984), p. 12.
81. INDOC (1981) p. 2-3. Cf. also ibid., (1983), p. 4f.
82. The quotations are from INDOC (1984), pp. 11 f.
83. Ibid., pp. 9.f.
84. Interviews with non-co-opted union leaders and activists in Jakarta, May 1984.
85. Ibid.

86. Mather (1983).
87. INDOC (1983), p. 4.
88. Mather (1983), INDOC (1981), (1982), (1983) and (1984), and *Newsletter on International Labour Studies* (1983) in which, among other things, it is mentioned that 85-95 per cent of the workers within textiles, pharmaceuticals and electronics are women, p. 8.
89. This is confirmed by, among others, scholars within INDOC, who stress that many of the conflicts reported with this character might not have been documented within their publications, since INDOC gave priority to violations of the ILO-conventions. Interviews, Leiden, April 1984. The same was stressed by scholars on labour relations within legal aid sources. Interviews. Jakarta, May 1984; as well as during research in 1979 and 1980.
90. Cf. INDOC (1984) and see the last note above beginning with capital (A).
91. Cf for these concepts Arrighi (1983).
92. Interview Jakarta May 25.
93. See the last note above beginning with capital (A). Some scholars did, however, add that the FBSI in certain cases reached outside the regularly employed workers, depending on the local situation, balance of forces, etc.
94. Already in INDOC (1981), p. 67 it was mentioned that out of 100,000 industrial firms, less than 10 per cent had FBSI-organised associations.
95. *Newsletter on International Labour Studies* (1983), p. 8.
96. *Human Rights...* (1980), p. 24. Cf.World Bank (1983) for more detailed figures.
97. See e.g. van Wersch (1989), pp. 28 and 84.
98. Omvedt (1984).
99. Anand (1983) p. 9 maintains that there was enough stock for between six and eight weeks.
100. Interview with A.N. Oza 1985 01 24.
101. Bakshi (1986), p. 76.
102. Interview with A.N. Oza 1985 01 24.
103. Lakha (1988), p. 49.
104. Bidwai (1983), p. 83.
105. See at first hand ibid.
106. van Wersch (1989), pp. 32f.
107. The powerloom sector is made up of small units with mechanised looms. More than forty per cent of the powerlooms in India were located in Maharashtra; *Problems of powerloom industry...* (1984) table 2.
108. See e. g. van Wersch (1989), mainly in Ch. 1, but most interesting on pp. 101ff, Bidwai (1983), pp. 88 ff, D'Cunha (1983), and Kapoor et al. (1983), pp. 75 ff. I also draw on interviews with A.N. Oza 1985 01 24 and Krishna Raj 1985 01 26.
109. Already the modernisation which had taken place before the strike had caused protests. Cf. Patankar (Mss.), p. 6. Cf. Chitnis' statement in interview 1985 01 25: "we can link agreements to the increasing of production, but management should also be improved and of course we can not accept any retrenchments."
110. Red-flag unions found no reason to "contribute to the survival of capitalism", while other unions gave priority to short-term benefits for the labourers.
111. Cf. the solution suggested in Bidwai (1983), p. 87.
112. Stressed not least by Chitnis, interview 1985 01 25.
113. Cf. Bakshi (1986), p. 139.

114. See at first hand van Wersch (1989), pp. 34 ff. , Anand (1983), pp. 33 ff., Bidwai (1983), and parts of *Problems of powerloom industry...* (1984). I also draw on interviews with A.N. Oza 1985 01 24, and with Kumar Ketkar 1985 01 25.
115. Goswami (1985), pp. 1603 and 1612. Cf also *Problems of powerloom industry...* (1984), e.g. pp. 8f.
116. Lakha (1988), p. 47 referring to *Times of India,* March 12, 1982.
117. Interview with Pendse 1985 01 25. Neither were, to my knowledge, Gramscian ideas about factory councils, including the political importance of stressing workers role as not only wage earners but also producers, important during the Bombay textile strike.
118. (A) Interview with Kumar Ketkar 1985 01 25; see also van Wersch (1989), pp. 84 ff. Cf. Panjwani (1983), pp. 364-405 for a study of Samant versus the CPI-M's CITU-unions.
119. Bakshi (1986), p. 40.
120. (B)In addition the last note above beginning with capital (A), see, e.g. Bakshi (1986), Ch. 2, and e.g. pp. 67, and 78, Bhattacherjee (1988), pp. 226f., and an interview with Samant in *Sydasien* (South Asia) (1983), No 2, p. 21. I also draw on interviews with Bidwai 1985 01 24, Pendse 1985 01 25 and Montiero 1985 01 24.
121. A wage increase of about Rs. 200 per month. Bakshi (1986), p. 20 and interview with Ketkar 1985 01 25. Cf. also Bhattacherjee (1988), pp. 224 ff.
122. See the last notes above beginning with capital (A) and (B).
123. Bakshi (1986), pp. 79f., van Wersch (1989), pp. 79f., and Ketkar in interview 1985 01 25, and 1987 07 13.
124. Ketkar in interview 1985 01 25.
125. Interviews with S.A. Dange 1985 01 27 and with Ketkar 1985 01 25.
126. When nothing else is mentioned in this paragraph see van Wersch (1989), e.g. pp. 145 f. and the general conclusion on p. 367, Bakshi (1986) and Lakha (1988) passim. I draw also on interviews with Bidwai 1985 01 24 and Ketkar 1985 01 25.
127. See e.g. Bakshi (17 07 1986), pp. 129f.
128. Gunnarsson (1983), p. 18
129. Ibid., p. 138.
130. van Wersch (1989) p. 39.
131. Ibid., pp. 32 and 146.
132. Cf. van Wersch (1989), pp. 101f.
133. See Volume One, Törnquist (1989).
134. See Lakha (1988), p. 49 referring to statements in *The Times of India* , February 19 and April 12, 1982. I draw also on interviews with Chitnis 1985 01 25 and with Ketkar 1985 01 25 as well as 1987 07 13.
135. Ketkar in interview 1985 01 25 and especially 1987 07 13.
136. van Wersch (1989), pp. 73-77.
137. According to Samant: as little as Rs. 150 to Rs. 200 as "an interim relief and subsequently we can have the committee". Ibid., p. 77.
138. Bhuta Singh.
139. van Wersch (1989), p. 77.
140. Ibid., pp. 104f.
141. Quoted from van Wersch's interview with R.N. Joshi , p. 79
142. Ibid. pp. 103 ff.
143. Bakshi (1986), pp. 182 ff.
144. Ibid. pp. 144 ff. Most mills were rather centrally located in Bombay, where land prices are incredibly high.

140. Ibid., pp. 104f.
141. Quoted from van Wersch's interview with R.N. Joshi , p. 79
142. Ibid. pp. 103 ff.
143. Bakshi (1986), pp. 182 ff.
144. Ibid. pp. 144 ff. Most mills were rather centrally located in Bombay, where land prices are incredibly high.
145. van Wersch (1989), pp. 173 ff. and 43 ff.
146. See, e.g. Singh (1983), pp. 44 f., van Wesrch (1989), pp. 164ff. and Omvedt (1984), p. 11.
147. For a recent study of the railway workers strike see Sherlock (1989).
148. Cf. Panjwani (1983), pp. 294ff.
149. Gail Omvedt in interview 1985 01 26.
150. van Wersch (1989), p. 172.
151. Ibid.
152. For more about the BIR-Act and the RMMS see, e.g. Panjwani (1983), *A joint report* (1983), and van Wersch (1983), especially pp. 60-81. and 180ff.
153. Cf. e.g. van Wersch (1989), pp. 67f.
154. See e.g. Bakshi (1986), Ch. 2, 4 and 5.
155. Quoted from van Wersch (1989), p. 80.
156. Panjwani (1983), pp. 364 f.
157. van Wersch (1989), pp. 364 f and Bhattacherjee (1988), pp. 224 ff.
158. Singh (1983), p. 45.
159. Cf. van Wersch, p. 365.
160. Ibid., p. 228.
161. This had previously been the case. Ibid., p. 365.
162. See e.g. Bakshi (1986), pp. 60 and Bhattacherjee (1988) p. 227. Kumar Ketkar, interview 1985 01 25, has pointed out that before the mid-sixties permanent and non-permanent workers had often been pitted against each other, but that S.A. Dange actively tried to include the *badlis* in the 1975 strike, and that this policy was even more consistent and successful in 1982.
163. Whereas in most third world countries industrial workers are socially and geographically isolated and thus often divided along these lines. Omvedt (1983), p. 4.
164. Panjwani (1983), e.g. pp. 212f.
165. Kumar Ketkar, interview 1987 07 13.
166. The estimates vary from between 33 per cent to 80 per cent. See van Wersch (1989), pp. 150ff and, for instance, Bakshi (1986), p. 130.
167. Panjwani (1983), p. 135 (referring to Deshpande's study of the Bombay labour market from 1979). According to interviews by Kapoor et al. (1983), p. 65, most workers seemed to hold land, but the land was not enough to support the entire family.
168. Kapoor et al. (1983), pp. 96f.
169. Ibid., pp. 97ff.
170. Interview with Ashok Upadhyay 1987 07 13. See also Lakha (1988), pp. 49f.
171. See e.g. van Wersch Ch. 8.1, and pp. 32, 146 and 349. I draw also on discussions with, among others, Pendse 1985 01 25.
172. van Wersch (1989), pp. 113f. and 366.
173. Ibid., pp. 223ff. and e.g. 349.
174. See e.g. Kapoor et al. (1983).
175. See Singh (1983) p. 49f., van Wersch (1989), pp. 147 ff., and Bakshi (1986), e.g. pp. 123ff., 184f., and 230f. It is also interesting to note that

the percentage of women workers had declined continually since independence from some 15-30 per cent to about 5 per cent, which naturally weakened the labour movement. See Patankar (Mss.), p. 5.

176. Bakshi (1986), pp. 218 and 224.
177. Cf. van Wersch, pp. 369 f.
178. Patankar (Mss), pp. 25 ff. and Anand (1983), pp. 29 f.
179. Cf. Omvedt (1983a) and (1984)
180. See mainly the writings of Omvedt and Patankar
181. Most of them lived in the suburbs, and in the outlying poor parts of the Sangli district.
182. See e.g. Patankar (Mss.), pp. 33 ff. and Bakshi (1986), pp. 186f.
183. Cf. Bakshi (1986), p. 187.
184. In early 1982, Samant was actually convinced by his Lal Nishan friends to turn down an invitation to attend a Sharad Joshi conference and to instead join a militant agricultural workers' meeting which they had organised at the same time in the same city. See Patankar (Mss.), pp. 14 f. and Anand (1983), p. 17.
185. Gail Omvedt is perhaps the most well known. See Chapter Four above on the discussion about the present agrarian transformation in general and the farmers movement in particular.
186. van Wersch (1989), p. 158; see also pp. 149-157.
187. Anand (1983), p. 12.
188. van Wersch (1989), pp. 115.
189. Bakshi (1986), pp. 236 ff.
190. See e.g. Ibid., Ch. 9 and pp. 230f., and 327ff. In October 1985 the shop floor activists were so disillusioned that a one-day strike called by Samant became a total failure. Ibid., p. 240.
191. van Wersch (1989), summarised on p. 229.
192. Ibid. (1989), pp. 91f.
193. Discussion with Pendse 1985 01 25.

PART III

CONCLUSION OF VOLUMES I AND II

Communists on the Retreat

Marxist theories were already important in the nineteen-twenties during the anti-colonial struggles in Far East Asian countries like India and Indonesia.

The interpretations made by Communists were usually the most influential. According to them, the development of nation-states and bourgeois revolutions similar to those in Europe was held back by imperialists and their more or less feudal allies in "the East". Hence, shortcuts to progress were not only possible, but necessary. Bourgeois revolutionary changes had to be implemented by way of radical political struggles for the creation of independent nation-states, which would then be able to foster agrarian reforms and industrial development.

Similar ideas were often subscribed to by many non-communist nationalist leaders including such as Nehru and Sukarno.

The Communists who gained influence were characterised by their eagerness to uphold broad social and political alliances in favour of revolutionary bourgeois transitions—although their long-term strategic calculation was that they themselves would eventually be able to get sufficient popular support to take over leadership when less consistent nationalists hesitated.

The scientific and political interpretation of Marxism which became decisive was thus in favour of broad alliances and shortcuts to progress in the struggle against an exploitative and repressive imperialism. When consistently applied, this strategy was also successful after independence, against "neo-colonialism" and for development.

In recent decades, however, another trend has been on the offensive. International capitalism expanded in the Far East through improved technology and less regulated markets. Certain undeniable dynamic effects were implanted in many countries via authoritarian state

interventions. In some cases industry developed rapidly. In India growth was slower, though stable. But rarely did broad, increasingly unified labour movements emerge. Capitalist-oriented green revolutions resulted neither in big estate-holders nor huge amounts of revolutionary tenants or agrarian workers. The Indonesian Communists were massacred; other similar movements were forced to retreat.

The once offensive and politically viable development project of the radical Left was thus bypassed. Most organisations had to give priority to the defence of their supporters against the onslaught of rapid capitalist modernisation. Nowhere did viable developmental alternatives emerge. The Philippine Communists expanded rapidly for some years, but gave almost exclusive priority to the struggle against landlordism, thus allowing bourgeois forces to dominate the struggle for political democracy.

Instead, various social movements and radical action groups in favour of the "civil society against the state" mushroomed all over South and Southeast Asia. On the one hand, the traditional Left—including the state-socialist regime in Peking—usually slander and fight these movements. On the other hand, international aid foundations and their governments—which talk about the need to deregulate and privatise the post-colonial state—try to kiss them to death.

Established Explanations Insufficient

This new path of development is, of course, difficult to explain with neo-classical ideas about the invisible hand of the market, dynamic capitalists, and no shortcuts to progress.

The state has been the most decisive and visible actor, guiding most of the rapid transformations.

It is not difficult to identify examples of poor public administration and inefficient "soft states", governed by so called parasitic "rent seekers", which "must be deregulated". But even the Indonesian state and its rulers—which should be a very good case in point— have proved quite capable of promoting rapid growth.

Neither do many central Marxist perspectives make much sense.

While one should not forget the devastating role of imperialism, international dependency relations have often promoted much of the recent rapid development, rather than the other way around. The new decisive capitalists may collaborate with foreign partners but are rarely compradors without any substantial base of their own. And many

"lumpen" bourgeois forces have actually been forced to sustain their positions by endorsing development.

Generally speaking it is, in addition, not big capitalists who have enforced the decisive state interventions, but the state which has fostered the growth of big capitalists.

Parallels with the historical role of the state in Europe, especially in Eastern Europe, suffer from the failure to take Asiatic specificities, including weaker private institutions, into consideration.

Moreover, the strength of the state is not only due to external aid and factors such as oil revenues, but also to an ability of its rulers to appropriate parts of the surplus produced.

Political democracy did not follow from stronger capitalists, since the latter were rarely able to expand without authoritarian state protection.

The problems of democracy may be explained by the fact that industrialisation and the emergence of strong labour movements preceded political democracy in Europe, while this is not the case in countries such as India and Indonesia. But what, then, is the *actual* situation in such countries? Which contradictions and what social movements are likely to generate democratisation under these countries' unique conditions?

The transition to capitalism in the rural areas has not contributed to a sharp polarisation between large farmers and agricultural workers. In addition to this, what are the relations of exploitation which have led to the contemporary rural discontent? And what is it that prevents the huge numbers of people, in urban as well as rural areas, who are now subject to different forms of capitalist exploitation, from forming a broad and powerful labour movement?

Finally, how shall one understand the many new social movements, including those drawing on communal loyalties, and environmental organisations, and various other action groups? Is it really fruitful to explain them in terms of bad class-consciousness, imperialist penetration, and divide-and-rule politics applied by dominating classes and their political organisations?

Alternative Descriptions Exclude the Material Foundations

Many decisive attributes of the post-colonial processes of development are more fruitfully described, if not explained, within the framework of neo-Marxist and institutional schools of thought.

For instance, it is obvious that the states and their rulers are relatively autonomous. But how is this best explained? Clearly it is due neither to weak capitalism, nor to the emergence of a capitalism so "advanced" that it can do without extra-economic interventions—but quite on the contrary.

The lack of a dominant contradiction between a bourgeoisie and a rising proletariat makes it difficult to employ classical studies of Bonapartist solutions. Hence, the relative autonomy is not due to weak or strong, independent civil classes, but mainly to an increase in the powers of the state.

Those who suggest institutional perspectives would have us believe that this is because of an immense, coercive state apparatus. But, to begin with, these states are not unified actors.

Much interesting research has described how the organs of the state have been penetrated both from within and from without. We have quite substantial knowledge about the background of the groups that penetrate the state from without. We need to know more about the basis of those who arise from within the state itself. Only then can we hope to *explain* the frequent corruption, patron-client relations, and corporatist forms of co-operation with important civil groups which have developed in these countries.

We should thus add the material foundations to the just mentioned important observations about institutions and clientelism.

A second example of important observations excluding the material foundation is the neo-liberal and public choice-oriented idea that people within the public sector are interested in manipulating the market in order to make extra money from their privileges. They are engaged in unproductive "rent-seeking" activities.

Obviously, as with the notion of relative autonomy, this also reflects some important aspects of the reality in India and Indonesia. But many of these "parasites" actually promote rapid development, while a lot of actors who survive on the market are, to say the least, quite speculative and "rent-seeking".

The basis of the political rentiers is thus not exclusively the relative lack of markets but must be better explained. Consequently, the task is once again to identify the material foundations.

Thirdly, fruitful observations have been made about the still very important role of extra-economic forces in the rural context, including those in the hands of the state, and the effects of those forces on the balance of power. But those factors are still external to the analysis of class formation. Hence, I fail to see that their decisiveness has been

sufficiently integrated into a conceptualisation of how exploitation and accumulation take place.

On the other hand, most attempts to emphasise secondary relations of exploitation, for instance via the market, may positively widen the horizon from the primary processes of production and the villages, but at the same time often lack a substantial analysis of the control of many means of production involved, outside and within the organs of the state, and may become preoccupied with the very distribution of the surplus.

Fourthly, the most serious contemporary conflicts are not between socially and politically formed classes, but are a result of tensions between various social movements drawing on religious, ethnic, regional and similar loyalties.

Fruitful analyses include those stressing the importance of central state oppression, political manipulation in general, and state-enforced brutal capitalism in particular, but lack yet again an identification of the material root-causes for such political interventions.

Finally, it is obvious that a lot of the many new social movements and action groups are wide open for new-right libertarianism, reinforced by the undisputable need for increased autonomy from authoritarian states.

Hence, the concept of "civil society against the state" is not particularly helpful when attempting to distinguish between various movements and their aims and means. A more fruitful analysis requires instead the identification of the primary state controls, regulation of resources, and political processes opposed by dissidents activists, and of the alternatives being proposed to take the place.

Approaching the Problems

Are Marxist theories and approaches so badly wounded by devastating political applications that they cannot include the above mentioned features, *and* help us explaining them by disclosing their material foundations? Have their capacity for regeneration degenerated with the bankruptcy of the Stalinist, Leninist, and Maoist political projects in Eastern Europe, in the Far East and elsewhere? Should one, on the analytical level, turn to institutional and other perspectives, and perhaps even join the support by the World Bank et al. of NGOs in an effort to get rid of at least one type of authoritarian attempt to employ devastating shortcuts to progress? Or is it possible to further develop

Marxist perspectives towards a more fruitful understanding of social and political processes?

The most common way of approaching the latter question would have been to test the explanatory power of relevant Marxist theories in some concrete settings. For instance, one could have applied Marxist theories about class and agriculture to an analysis of the socio-economic structure in some selected rural area. By doing so one would have been able to demonstrate that certain decisive tendencies are difficult to explain within the framework of available theories. One could then have proceeded by suggesting supplementary theoretical elements, or, if necessary, alternative theories, in order to take the lost factors into due consideration. One could finally have concluded by testing the explanatory power of those new analytical tools.

I have *not* done this. On the contrary, as a political scientist I have started on the level of political action. I have made use of the fact that Marxist theories are meant not only to explain the world, but also to guide attempts at consciously changing it. Hence, I have tested the explanatory power of relevant existing Marxist theories by examining to what extent they have proved politically fruitful. Have they been efficient as instruments for predicting the main course of development, identifying friends and enemies, and planning political actions? The outcome of important political struggles which have been reasonably consistently guided by those theories indicate what the actors have not been able to take into consideration with the use of their analytical approach. I have thereafter suggested supplementary theoretical elements which make it possible to describe and explain these previously neglected factors. Finally, I have tried to make some use of the new analytical tools.

Moreover, by applying this approach in a comparison of two very different societies, India and Indonesia, it has been possible to set aside historically specific causes of many problems, and to concentrate instead on factors which were similar and which could in both countries not be taken into consideration within the framework of the predominant Marxist perspectives.

Initial Findings

What are then, to begin with, the important processes which have been difficult for Communists in India and Indonesia to take into consideration by employing mainstream Marxism?—neglects which in turn may have contributed to the previously indicated problems of

explaining the general transformation of post-colonial societies in South and Southeast Asia.

Escape routes for the "national bourgeoisie"

Did the forces which the Communists who employed mainstream Marxism identified as "national bourgeois" actually behave as expected by fighting for an independent economic development?

Many nationalists tried. But after the independence Indonesian capitalists were weak. Rather than strengthening the capitalists, "progressive" politicians and administrators often became middlemen instead.

While the Indian capitalists were much stronger, extra-income seeking politicians and administrators saw to it, as in Indonesia, that capable businessmen were not compelled to function as progressive capitalists in order to survive.

Did "national bourgeois" forces struggle for the radical "anti-feudal" changes in the agrarian sector which was predicted by Communist analysts?

The experiences in Indonesia up to the nineteen-sixties indicate that the socio-economic base of those peasants with a potential to become farmers lay not only in ownership of land, but also in the holding of administrative and political positions within the local organs of the state. They could thus evade bourgeois developments by using these bastions for their extraction of economic surplus.

The former tenants in India, on the other hand, while more tied to the land they had gained, could nevertheless obtain sufficient political and administrative protection—which also spilled over to the rural masses in general—to escape much of the progressive logic of capitalism: to compete, invest, and produce more cheaply in greater quantity.

Did the "national bourgeois" forces foster the development of bourgeois liberal democracy foreseen by Communists?

When the domestic bourgeoisie was weak in Indonesia, aspiring political representatives fought actively for democracy. But when they began to consolidate and further develop their positions, not least by use of the state, they undermined the democratic processes.

The Indian developments are less drastic. But at any rate, the problems of democracy cannot be related to weakened domestic capitalists since they did actually become stronger and stronger.

The development of democracy in both countries had instead more to do with the interests of traditional patrons and élites in reproducing and further strengthening their own positions, than with the emergence of independent capitalists with less need for extra-economic powers to foster their positions. Eventually, as the Communists made electoral advances in Indonesia, even this élite-and-patron democracy became increasingly difficult to uphold.

New bases of the state

Despite the presence of conditions prescribed by many Communists, and despite harsh measures, such as states of emergency, neither the Indonesian nor the Indian state and their leaders, including Communist supporters, have been capable of initiating so-called non-capitalist development as a substitute for the failure of the "national bourgeoisie". The previous relative autonomy and capacity of the state and progressive leaders were decisively restricted by the emergence of other forces, not only from without, but also from within the state itself.

In Indonesia, many of the so-called anti-people officers and bureaucrats ("bureaucratic capitalists"), who had emerged in the late-fifties and early-sixties, did not primarily rely on landlords, compradors, and imperialists as maintained by the Communists, but were instead busy creating a class base of their own.

This is indicated by the fact that the radical struggles against imperialism and privatisations which Communists prescribed were successful as such but nevertheless did not hurt these new state-based capitalists. They proceeded instead to gain control over more and more nationalised companies, and over the state regulation of the economy as a whole. And very few of them would have benefited from so-called liberalisations; only later on were they able to dictate and thereby benefit from discretionary privatisations and co-operation with private domestic, as well as foreign capitalists.

In India, especially from the early-seventies and onwards, state authoritarianism had few of the direct connections with big bourgeois interests of enforcing or defending capitalism from above which many Communists claimed were decisive.

On the one hand, the big capitalists certainly benefited from her authoritarianism. But on the other hand, this does not indicate that they

were in desperate need of the state of emergency. Despite the fact that two years of emergency rule did not produce much of structural change, business continued as usual afterwards.

Mrs. Gandhi did not carry out a "one-party dictatorship", but rather had to rely on the executive organs of the state. She did not resemble a queen carrying out an absolutist anti-feudalism as some Communists would have it. Neither did she manage to act as an Indian Bismarck, by forming an alliance between big capitalists and *junkers* as others suggested. And she was no Bonaparte, stepping in because of a stalemate between capitalists, who could not rule, and workers. The serious threat facing the rulers was not the proletariat, but rather competing political and administrative factions among the privileged. The more recent deregulations under her son were, finally, not only state-led and discretionary, but occasionally also questioned by powerful groups which did not like to lose comfortable protection.

Other bases of rural power

Monopoly of land was not the only main basis of power as most Communists almost took for granted. Despite fairly successful demonopolisation in Kerala and West Bengal, and strong attempts in similar directions during the early-sixties on Java, other important bases of power were not undermined. These included political and administrative positions, communal loyalties of different kinds, and the ability to manipulate markets, the supply of credits, etc. These were used to repress militant popular struggles, evade laws, and to uphold as well as to create new vested interests in land. What are the indicators?

When rent on land was prohibited in Kerala and regulated in West Bengal, other important forms of exploitation remained: petty landlordism developed in West Bengal, while wage labour increased in both areas as did the appropriation of surplus on the market and within local organs of the state.

There is little indication that the expected developments in production resulted when land or increased security and lower rents were given to the tenants. In Kerala and West Bengal, many actual producers with limited landholdings were unable to get access to a lot of other necessary resources such as credits, water and other inputs, and sufficient influence on the market. Unviability and an extreme dependence upon patrons made it difficult for Javanese tillers to struggle for even basic land reform laws.

The actual producers may not have been able to struggle without political protection and support, which Communists considered were necessary, against the extra-economic means commanded by the landlords. But at the same time, the Javanese Communists were domesticated by their reliance upon Sukarno's political patronage. Their comrades in Kerala fell (until recently) into the traps of various dubious electoral alliances, in order to get the chance to support the peoples' struggle from the top-down. And in West Bengal the rationale, apparently, was to transfer most producers' dependence cum political loyalties from their landlords and other patrons to the Party people in control of state resources. The *panchayats were* democratised, but organisation and democratic co-operation were not developed at the level where most of the producers had their potential basis of strength—their capacity to work. Consequently, the majority of the people remained too weak to control, or at least check, and make use of the political institutions and the resources that others were thus able to regulate and begin to monopolise.

Most Communists expected the majority of the rural masses to be able to unite on the basis of a common hunger for land, but clearly they were not. On Java there were few large owners of land to fight against. Other interests within the peasantry became more important and caused divisions. If we exclude the early struggles against the comparatively large feudal-like landownership in north Kerala, the same problem soon occurred in the state as a whole, and was further aggravated by the land reforms, which created new and more widespread vested interests in land and the surplus produced. In West Bengal the problem first appeared when an attempt was made to give priority to the extremely poor and landless, rather than to tenants—which then prevented any further emphasis on struggles for radical distribution of land. The Communists in Kerala and West Bengal have since been busy trying to mediate between various conflicting interests in the rural areas.

The lack of redistributable land was even greater if one excluded land rented out to tenants, and concentrated on what was left above the ceilings. Most of the so-called landless peasants have not lost land, which Communists often maintained. In some cases there is even a decrease in the percentage of land concentrated in the hands of a few landowners, with more owners of marginal plots. The number of rural wage labourers increased, but hardly because of expropriation of land. Rather, the population has increased, there are more off-farm jobs, less tenants, more hired labour on even tiny plots, etc. And the often

indisputable concentration of *control* of land seems mainly to be due to ownership of, or control over, other necessary resources such as inputs and credits (but also control of state or village land, and land owned by, for instance, religious institutions) rather than privately owned land. Rural labourers have thus been left behind. Few of them acquired land. And increases in standard of living, which were predicted to occur as a result of the developmental effects of land reform, have failed to materialise.

A Supplementary Theoretical Proposition

There were thus three decisive processes which the Communists were unable to take into proper consideration by employing mainstream Marxism: the escape routes of the "national bourgeoisie", the new bases of the state, and the additional bases of rural power. The analytical perspectives did mainly allow for identification of sources of power outside the political sphere. At first hand, one should therefore try to develop certain *supplementary* analytical tools with which it may be possible to overcome the problems. Only if we fail to do that would it be intellectually respectable to proceed by abandoning the Marxist project and try to develop entirely new theories.

My general conclusion is that it is possible to take the disregarded processes into fruitful consideration by extending the analysis of conditions of production, and by identifying primary and secondary appropriation of surplus labour which is made possible by control of previously analytically neglected conditions of production.

Firstly, we should add studies of the ways in which publicly owned means of production are actually controlled, to existing, more conventional analyses of privately owned land, capital etc.

Secondly, we must analyse the control of many decisive conditions of production which are not directly parts of the units of production, including private and public credits, licenses, water, high-yielding varieties, control of labour etc.

Thirdly, we should analyse the importance of control over the regulation of resources.

Fourthly, control and regulation of the above conditions of production facilitate appropriation of monopoly rents. Surplus labour is thereby appropriated directly (for instance, from agricultural labourers), or indirectly (through the farmers).

I have further maintained that monopolisation of publicly owned conditions of production, and appropriation of monopoly rents, are decisive material foundations for what is usually labelled the huge power of the state as well as for patrons—with their ideologies based on factors such as ethnicity—whose resources their clients are so dependent upon for their survival.

This is not to say that appropriation of surplus labour through rents is the only, or even the basic, form of exploitation; nor is it to argue that all conditions of production are controlled from within different organs of the state. I would, however, maintain that the analysis of these conditions of production, this way of controlling them, and this way of appropriating monopoly rents, are among the main features which are missing within Marxism, and which have proved decisive in post-colonial societies like Indonesia and India. Finally, I would also suggest that popular struggles against monopolisation of such conditions of production and appropriation of rents—possibly and hopefully by way of democratisation rather than privatisation of public government—is likely to be of utmost importance.

Additional Findings

Do these supplementary tools help? I have made an attempt to explore this in general studies of some recent experiences of the Left in India and Indonesia.

Unviable Maoist liberation

It is revealing to analyse some of the attempts in the seventies to initiate a Maoist inspired rural revolution in India from this point of view.

It was possible to initiate (if not to sustain) anti-feudal cnanges only in backward areas where the producers were united by tribal or similar loyalties, and had to some extent become viable after liberation from established extra-economic oppression. Elsewhere, this kind of liberation did not provide people with enough conditions of production to make survival and transition possible.

Finally, the downtrodden people were not able to unite against some few big landlords due to the limited availability of "surplus" land, and to the importance of conflicts other than those over land.

New movements against the state

The key role of appropriation of surplus via rent on conditions of production, which are often both external to the processes of production and controlled from within the state, is also illustrated by the type of conflicts which are going on in contemporary rural India and Indonesia. The central unifying contradiction is not primarily between landlords and tillers over land, or farmers and their labourers over the distribution of surplus value. Rather it is, on the one hand, between those who—usually from within state organs—are able to demand a monopoly rent for the use of external conditions of production, and, on the other hand, the actual producers at various levels who are in desperate need of such resources. This is indicated by the following developments.

Most Indian Communists have by necessity been forced to address the issue of indirect appropriation of surplus produced by peasants, especially through the market, where the state is a decisive actor.

An even more spectacular recent example of the increasing role of the state, the markets, and of conditions of production other than privately held land, is the significance of the non-party-led all-farmers' movements in India, which have struggled not for land reforms, but for more favourable prices and government supports. These movements include both big and small peasants who have been affected by the green revolution and who produce for the market. They are extremely dependent on the price they get for their products, and on the all-important credits and inputs, which must now be bought on the market and whose availability and price are thus of strategic importance. Similar conflicts are latent in Indonesia.

Many other new social movements have emerged and most of them seem to be up against the state. The most serious conflicts in contemporary India are related to religious and other communal groups, including those drawing on caste loyalties, which are hurt and/or manipulated by the state's enforcement of an unbalanced and brutal capitalist "modernisation". Both in India and in Indonesia such policies have also generated a whole set of more specific *new* issues and threats against huge masses of people. Environmental problems, the subordination of women, human rights etc. have led to the emergence of many new social movements and action groups.

It is also interesting to note that recent quite frequent conflicts over land in Indonesia have been against the state and those who work through and with it. People have turned, firstly, against state-owned and state-supported estates which expropriate or redistribute land earlier

taken by or given to peasants; and, secondly, against state-supported expropriation and destruction of land for "development purposes".

Finally, several of the above mentioned action groups and movements in both countries now find it necessary to give priority to struggles for basic rights as a prerequisite for any kind of real democratic rule.

At the same time, however, some of them tend to follow the best available patron, and rally behind demands for privatisation rather than democratisation when they turn against political monopolies. It is only in certain cases that the struggle for democratic rule has become necessary in order for movements and organisations to reach their fundamental socio-economic aims.

This holds true for the Communists as well. In West Bengal in 1977 they found partial democratisation of local control and government of certain additional resources within agriculture beyond simply land necessary. This was both in order to give weak peasants a chance to survive, and to gain their support as dependent clients.

Ten years later the Communists in Kerala were forced to choose democratisation in order to encourage economic development through state and co-operative organs. This was also intended to generate broad popular support, but, thanks to more consistent anti-feudal reforms, the people of Kerala are less dependent on Communist patronage— and thus constitute a less solid votebank.

Beyond debates on agrarian transition and "the state and civil society"

The above mentioned development of new Communist policies, the farmers' movement, and the new social movements and NGOs have led to intensive debates in India and Indonesia. The fact that some "solutions" to certain aspects of these controversies may be found through the application of the theoretical arguments which I have proposed lends further support to their validity.

One discourse is on "State and agrarian transformation". Generally speaking, it has been argued that we are witnessing the rise of a more or less state-supported class of rich farmers, who may no longer need to own large units of land because the productivity per unit has increased, who exploit their labourers, and who compete with other ruling classes for state resources. Others maintain that the peasantry as a whole is subject to an onslaught of state-led capitalist modernisation, including

commodification, and in particular, to an appropriation of surplus on the market.

I maintain that it is possible to solve some of the problems involved in this dispute by holding to an analysis of the control of the basic means of production, while at the same time also including the conditions of production which are not directly linked to farms, and which are not privately owned. Such a broader examination would make it possible to identify the roots of power and exploitation, as well as conflicts over the distribution of the surplus which is produced. Those who control many of the decisive external conditions of production (often from within various organs of the state) on which virtually every peasant depends for survival, are, thus, capable of directly and indirectly extracting parts of the agricultural surplus labour.

Another discourse is on the role and character of new social movements and NGOs. Some maintain that "civil society" is up against the state, which in authoritarian and brutal ways imposes "modernisation". This top-down development project, which includes the traditional sphere of the established Left, can only be altered by more autonomous popular forces, and by actions from below. Others would have it that most new movements and NGOs undermine the nation-state, pave the way for privatisations and imperialist penetration. Additionally, those in favour of the new movements and organisations pay little attention to basic relations of exploitation, to the identification and organisation of driving social and political forces, and to the struggle over state power.

While many of these and similar arguments are important, they are neither mutually exclusive, nor, as they stand, reconcilable. It is no solution to apply the notion of "civil society against the state". It is unfruitful to separate the two. It is, however, possible to continue to discuss struggles against the state, in terms of resistance to the monopolisation of formally public conditions of production and regulation. This occurs in capitalist, as well as state-socialist countries. The different new social movements, and NGOs and their well-wishers, may thus be more fruitfully analysed in terms of their actions and goals. Which formally public resources are they up against? How are these resources used? Who controls them? What alternatives do they suggest and practice? Do they opt mainly for privatisation or democratisation? Which state capacities do they want to weaken or strengthen, and how?

Workers in face of the state

Finally, a comparative study of labour protests in Indonesia and the Bombay textile strike demonstrates that the conflicts between capital and labour were seriously conditioned by important rent-capitalist features including,

- the capacity of employers to move capital and production out of reach of militant workers by way of a politically facilitated centralisation of capital;
- capitalists' access to decisive additional conditions of production controlled by partners within various organs of the state, against which the labourers' main emphasis on strikes in their employers' units of production was a blunted weapon;
- personalised dependency relationships as means of controlling labour outside modern production, firstly, as a supplementary domestication of those employed within the factories, and secondly, to control the many other labourers who did not stage militant actions, including the majority of the labour force who stayed outside direct conflicts between capital and labour, and with whom the militant workers proved largely unable to build alliances.

Implications

The above indicators of what the actors had not been able to take into due consideration brought me to the supplementary theoretical proposition that we should extend the analysis of conditions of production. What are the implications, politically and in terms of likely future development?

When this project was initiated in 1983 and 1984, I suggested that if the monopolisation of publicly owned conditions of production, facilitating appropriation of rents, proved decisive, broad popular resistance and struggles for democratic forms of government would become vital. The actual importance of struggles for democracy against Marcos' authoritarian cronyism in the Philippines, which became obvious in late 1985 and early 1986; the role of broad actions for democratisation against politically based economic monopolies in Burma some years later; the Communist comeback in Kerala partly thanks to ideas about the democratisation of political and co-operative institutions as paving the way for economic and social development; and the total bankruptcy of what I would call state-monopoly-socialism

in face of broad demands for its democratisation—these, among many other similar transformations, hardly speak against my prognosis.

However, I continue to refrain from suggesting appropriate political strategies, from "telling the leaders what they should do"! The aim of my research is not normative. The object has rather been the movements themselves, their problems in making use of Marxism, and the resultant identifiable theoretical insufficiencies.

On the other hand, I am prepared to say that the problems have proved to be of such a nature that the political implication of the only fruitful way of solving them theoretically is that struggles for more popular freedom and better standards of living presuppose broad political action in favour of democratic rights and rule.

The reason for this limited statement is that I have only concentrated on what has been neglected. Control of, and rents on, conditions of production from within various organs of the state may be decisive, but the importance of other forms of control over these as well as other conditions of production, and forms of appropriating surplus labour, must be taken into account when developing political recommendations and strategies. Viewed thus, my results (not to mention my experience from concrete daily realities in Indonesia and India) are quite insufficient. The conclusions should be read and used only as one of many contributions within a non-organised but still collective effort.

Having said this, let me, in conclusion, stress once again that my results strongly indicate that the way in which capitalism expands in societies like Indonesia and India generates powerful preconditions for struggles in favour of democracy which are in turn generated by conflicts over the control and regulation of formally public conditions of production, and over appropriation of surplus labour based on its monopolisation. The struggle for democracy is thus associated with basic material interests among different groups of people—just as the issue of nationalism against colonialism used to be.

Privileged sections of the population often prefer to de-monopolise by way of privatisation and limited democratic rule over the remaining common resources. The speed with which this may take place, depends on their capacity to carry on business without tight state protection. Just as many earlier nationalist leaders who opted for neo-colonial solutions, these forces receive full support from international agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. If no viable alternative is presented, they may be able to mobilise broad popular support.

But there is also the possibility that popular movements may find their own reasons to struggle for de-monopolisation by way of democratisation. Even where these movements link up with those in favour of privatisation at certain stages and on certain issues—as radical worker and peasant leaders sometimes came together with progressive private capitalists against colonialism—this does *not* serve to substitute the issue of democracy for class struggle against capitalist exploitation. The monopolisation of decisive common resources paves the way for the appropriation of surplus labour through rents, and serves in general to prevent people from demanding and implementing development policies in their own interest, and from institutionalising checkpoints against the rise of despotism of all kinds.

Thus, the most interesting question, and what I would like to further explore, is under what conditions, in what way, and for how long popular movements find that struggle for various democratic rights and rule is essential.

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Wiradi,G., Manning, C. Hartoyo, S. (1984). *Employment, rural labour markets and land tenure. A preliminary report of a recensus in nine villages in Java*, Agro Economic Survey, Bogor.

Wolters, Willem (1988). *Local level processes leading to agrarian differentiation: the case of desa Watulawang in Central Java*, Paper to workshop on agrarian change in Java, CASA, Amsterdam, February 5-8.

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Yoshi,Tsurumi (1989). Japanese investment in Indonesia: Ownership, technology transfer and political conflict, in *The Indonesian Economy*, (Ed.) Papanek, G.T. Praeger, New York.

Zacharias, J.D. (1983). *A lurah and his dynasty: a study of village officialdom in a village of north Central Java*, Monash University, Clayton-Melbourne.

INTERVIEWS

(The places where the interviews were carried out are indicated here. For information about when they were carried out, see the notes!)

Anonymous scholar and former labour activist. Jakarta.

Anonymous. Leading CPI-M member. New Delhi.

Anonymous. Then leading CPI-M member. Calcutta.

Athreya, Venkatesh. Professor of Economics, Bharatidasa University, Tiruchirapalli.

Balaram, N.E. State secretary of the CPI in Kerala. Trivandrum.

Banaji, Jairus. Senior radical political economist. Bombay.

Bandyopadhyay, D. Former Land Reforms Commissioner in West Bengal. New Delhi.

Bandyopadhyay, Nripen. Senior researcher with the Centre for Studies in Social Studies (Calcutta) focusing land reform problems in West Bengal. Calcutta.

Banerjee, Sumantra. Author, senior journalist and leading left wing intellectual. Calcutta and New Delhi.

Basavapunnaiah, M. Leading member of the CPI-M Polit Bureau; ideologist; editor of the party organ People's Democracy. New Delhi.

Bhat, M.K. Former state secretary of the CPI-M in Karnataka; at the time of the interview actively organising peasants. Bangalore.

Bhattacharaya, Debasis. Then General Secretary in the Association for Protection of Democratic Rights; related to the All India Peoples Front. Calcutta.

Bhattacharaya, Jayanta. CPI-M leader in charge of the 1969 militant peasant's movement in Sonarpor, 24-Parganas. Calcutta and Sonarpor.

Bidwai, Praful. Senior reporter and ass. editor *The Times of India.* Bombay. 1985.01.24

Booth, Anne. Senior political-economist and economic historian. Canberra.

Bose, Deb Kumar. Senior radical political economist. Calcutta.

Bose, Souren. Previously leading Naxalite; at the time of the interview associated with *"The Marxist Review"*. Calcutta.

Chandra, Bipan. Reputed senior historian; JNU; leading radical intellectual. New Delhi.

Chandrappan, C.K. Leading "coming" leader within the Kerala-CPI. Trivandrum.

Chatterjee, Prasanta. Member of CPI-M's Calcutta district committee, active within and well informed about committees in the slum. Calcutta.

Chattopadhay, Boudhayan. Then director of the CRESSIDA research centre and former leading intellectual within the CPI. Calcutta.

Chawdhury, Benoy. CPI-M. Minister of Land and Land Revenue, Left Front Government of West Bengal. Calcutta.

Dange, S.A. The late Former general secretary of the Indian Communist Party and main leader of the Bombay Textile Workers. Bombay.

Das Gupta, Ashim. CPI-M. Then leading member of the West Bengal state planning board; thereafter Minister of Finance, Left Front Government of West Bengal. Calcutta.

Das Gupta, Sailen. Principal CPI-M leader in financial matters in West Bengal. Calcutta.

Dasgupta, Biplab. Senior scholar, agrarian reform organiser and leading intellectual within the CPI-M and its peasant movement. Now also member of the Union Parliament. New Delhi.

Dorodjatun, Kuntjoro-Jakti. Senior political-economist. Jakarta.

Dutt, Kalyan. Senior social-science researcher focusing on the transformation of rural West Bengal. Calcutta.

Feith, Herb. Reputed senior political scientist specialising on Indonesia. Melbourne.

Former leaders within SOBSI, the previous largest and Communist-led trade union confederation in Indonesia. Holland.

Former minister of labour under Sukarno, Jakarta.

Franke, Richard. Senior anthropologist with experiences from Java and recently form Kerala during the 1987 elections. Kovalam.

Ghatak, Maitreya. Then researcher within the CRESSIDA program on the history of the Bengal peasant movements. Calcutta.

Ghosh, Santimoy. CPI-M leader and General Secretary of the All India Kisan Sabha. Calcutta and New Delhi.

Habib, Irfan. Reputed senior historian; Aligarh Muslim University; and leading intellectual within the CPI-M. Aligarh.

Hirchim, Babib. Progressive Muslim leader. Yogyakarta.

Issac, Thomas, Senior social science researcher with the Centre for Development Studies (Trivandrum) and leading member of Peoples' Science Movement. Trivandrum.

Kapoor, Harsh. Indian researcher and labour activist. The Hague.

Karat, Prakash. Leading member of the secretariat under the Polit Bureau of the CPI-M; rooted in Kerala; developed the party-line on new social movements and NGOs. New Delhi.

Kumar Ketkar. Senior economy and labour reporter with the *Economic Times.* Bombay.

Kurian, Mathew. The late former head of Indian Institute for Regional Development Studies (Kottayam), leading intellectual within the CPI-M and adviser to the first Left Government in Kerala. Kottayam.

Kurien, John, Research fellow with the Centre for Development Studies (Trivandrum) with main emphasis on people's attempts at developing their fishing in Kerala. Trivandrum.

Lindberg, Staffan. Senior researcher on agrarian structure and peasants' struggle with emphasis on Tamil Nadu. Lund.

McCawley, Peter. Senior political-economist on Indonesia. Canberra.

Menon, Achutha. CPI. Former Chief Minister in Kerala. Calicut.

Mitra, Ashok. Reputed senior scholar and journalist; leading intellectual within the CPI-M; then Minister of Finance in West Bengal. Calcutta.

Mohanty, Manoranjan. Senior political scientist (Delhi University) specialising on the state and new social movements; leading left wing intellectual. New Delhi, Mysore and Uppsala.

Mukherjee, Saroj. Secretary of the CPI-M State Committee in West Bengal; Leader of the Left Front in West Bengal. Calcutta.

Mukherjee, Sudhendu. Scholar and administrator with profound knowledge about transformations within slum areas in Calcutta. Calcutta.

Mukherji, Partha N. Senior sociologist (Indian Statistical Institute) focusing on new social movements, including the Naxalite movement. New Delhi.

Namboodiripad, E.M.S General Secretary of the CPI-M; former chief minister in two Kerala governments. New Delhi.

Navlakha, Gautam. Political scientist and assistant editor of the *Economic and Political Weekly*. New Delhi.

Nayak, Nalini. Leading NGO-activist in Kerala associated with the Programme for Community Organisation (Trivandrum). Trivandrum.

Nayanar, E.K. State secretary of the CPI-M in Kerala; Chief Minister of Left Front Governments in Kerala. Trivandrum.

Non-co-opted union leaders in Indonesia; activists and scholars on Indonesia. Holland, Australia and Indonesia.

Omvedt, Gail. Reputed political economist and leading left wing intellectual cum activist specialising on rural transformation. Bombay and Uppsala.

Oza, A.N. Senior political economist (whose special knowledge include concentration and centralisation within Indian industry). Bombay.

Patnaik, Prabat. Reputed senior political economist, JNU; leading intellectual within the CPI-M. New Delhi.

Pendse, Sandeep. Senior scholar and researcher, BUILD Documentation Centre, Bombay.

Pillai, Govinda. Leading intellectual and journalist within the CPI-M in Kerala. Trivandrum.

Rama Krishna. CPI-M leader incharge of its peasant movement in Kerala. Trivandrum.

Rana, Santosh, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India(Marxist-Leninist)-Provisional Central Committee. Calcutta..

Ratchandhury, Bhabani. Senior AITUC-leader. Calcutta.

Ravindranath, K.N. General Secretary of the Kerala CITU-Committee. Trivandrum.

Ray, Krishna. Senior political economist; the editor of *Economic and Political Weekly*. Bombay.

Roy, Biren. Then co-editor of "the Marxist Review"; trade union activist and scholar. Calcutta.

Roy, Manoranjan. General Secretary of the West Bengal CITU-Committee. Calcutta.

Rudra, Ashok. Reputed rural sociologist and left wing intellectual specialising on rural transformation in West Bengal. Santiniketan and Calcutta.

Sarbini, Prof. Senior political-economist. Jakarta.

Sasono, Adi. Senior scholar and head of Institute of Development Studies. Jakarta.

Scholars and activists within Indonesian Documentation and Information Centre, INDOC, Leiden.

Scholars in close contact with contemporary Indonesian trade union education. Jakarta.

Sen, Asok. Senior researcher with the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences (Calcutta) and leading radical intellectual close to the CPI. Calcutta.

Sen, Satyabrata. Member of the CPI-M state committee West Bengal and former leading member of the state planning board. Calcutta.

Sengupta, Sunil. Senior rural sociologist and former leading CPI-official specialising on rural development. Santiniketan.

Sethi, Harsh. Research officer Indian Council of Social Science Research. Scholar and leading intellectual within the new-left-oriented Indian NGOs; associated with Lokayan and its bulletin; at present research fellow with the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. New Delhi.

Sharma, J.M. Previous Naxalite activist in Andhra Pradesh; now intellectual leader within the Left oriented civil liberty movements in Andhra. New Delhi.

Siregar, Hariman. Main student leader during the 1974 *Malari* affair in Indonesia. Jakarta.

Subba Rao, C.V. Scholar, leading left wing intellectual and activist. Hyderabad.

Surjeet, Harkishan Singh. Member of the Polit Bureau CPI-M; in charge of the party led peasant movement.

Tharakan, Michael. Senior researcher with the Centre for Development Studies (Trivandrum) focusing on agrarian transformation in Kerala. Trivandrum.

Upadhyay, Ashok. Ass. editor *The Times of India.* Bombay.

Waterman, Peter. Editor of "Newsletter of International Labour Studies"; senior labour researcher. The Hague.

INDEX