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STATE AND FOREIGN POLICY: A THEORETICAL ABSTRACTION

The central purpose of this paper will be to contribute to the theoretical understanding of the relationship between state and foreign policy. The subject-matter has somewhat remained problematic, largely owing to the hegemonic influence of positivism, with its penchant for 'observable facts' and 'separate and isolated research'. This has, indeed, created a situation where the subject-matter of state and foreign policy has been compartmentalized, increasingly being investigated (as in the case of Bangladesh) in the disciplines of political science and international relations respectively. If anything, such compartmentalization has only helped nurture a distorted understanding of both state and foreign policy. While, for reasons of specialization and disciplinary uniqueness, separate and isolated research and investigations may be welcomed, it must be remembered that *reality* is neither fragmented nor isolated. This is not to say that reality is *fused*, where everything can be understood and theorized from one single particular point. While accounts in the latter form are found in various 'religious doctrines' and 'holistic theories', the point emphasized here is that, while conceptually and in appearance state

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and foreign policy are fragmented and appear independent, in reality they remain related, albeit dialectically as well as socially and politically. It is precisely this relationship that will be highlighted in this paper.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section will briefly explain the meaning of a theoretical abstraction. This will lay the foundation for the theoretical representation of the relationship between state and foreign policy. In the second section the understanding of the state with reference to the organization of the superstructure and concurrently foreign policy will be presented. The third section will then highlight the representation of the external dimension or foreign policy (or what has been referred to as the national-international dimension) of the state.

The meaning of theoretical abstraction

There are two fundamental theoretical elements that are related, albeit methodologically, in the understanding of a theoretical abstraction. The first one involves the exposition of a critique. Any critique is incomplete if it does not also include an alternative mode of conceptualization, or what might be referred to as 'a contribution to the critique'.¹ The latter remains at the very heart of the critique itself, since without an alternative mode of conceptualization there is no basis for the critique in the first place. Indeed, it is largely for having such

1. A classical understanding of this is found in Marx's 1859 work on political economy, which in the tradition of dialectics was titled *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. A close observation of the work reveals that the critique of classical political economy is simultaneously followed by 'a contribution', which has now come to be recognised in the parlance of social science as Marxist Political Economy. Marx's 1859 work on political economy represented the 'general outlines' of his monumental work *Capital* (1867).

an alternative mode of conceptualization that we undertake a critique, the nature of which can very well be represented abstractly.

This is, however, methodologically only one side of the matter, for such an abstraction remains valid (and this brings us to the second theoretical element in the understanding of a theoretical abstraction) only in the context of the reality of the subject-matter. We are obviously referring here to the dialectical relationship between abstract and concrete, reinforcing simultaneously the axiom (after Hegel) that 'there is no abstract truth: truth is concrete'.² In this light, the theoretical abstraction remains related to the reality of the subject-matter.

The mode of presenting the theoretical abstraction, however, requires further exposition. Two inter-related cognitive features may be highlighted. The first one relates to our understanding of the inseparable relationship between concept and theory. In our cases this will be represented by focussing on the relevant concepts in the context of the theoretical abstraction. The concepts, although separately formulated, must be viewed in their totality.

The second cognitive feature relates to our representation of the theoretical abstraction as what Michio Kaku refers to as a 'physical picture' (Kaku, 1987).³ This is a mode of thinking by which one sees the 'overall picture' in contrast to the mechanical representation of

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2. That is, a conception of an object is concrete when it presents itself with all the qualities and specific features and in the circumstances, environment, in which the object exists, and not abstracted from these circumstances and its living specific features (as it is presented by abstract thinking, the judgement of which has, therefore, no meaning for real life) (Plekhanov, (1895) 1994 : 548). See also James, (1980:13-66).
 3. Kaku is referring here to Einstein's mode of thinking :
Einstein once said that in his relativity theory he placed clocks everywhere

individual parts;⁴ the picture is then (in our case) formulated into a coherent theoretical abstraction by means of relevant concepts. Both the cognitive features are, therefore, inter-related, one supplementing the other. In our representation there will be two such 'physical pictures' one related to the understanding of state and the other related to the understanding of the national-international dimension of a state. However, the two physical pictures - although presented separately - must be viewed in their totality in the understanding of the relationship between the state and foreign policy.

State, Superstructure and Foreign Policy

The relationship between state and foreign policy may be conceptualized via two dimensions:

One, the understanding of the composition of the state structure, i.e., the relation between structure (social production) and superstructure (social ideas, social organizations, institutions, and ideological relations); and

in the universe, each beating at different rate, but in reality he couldn't afford to buy a clock for his home.

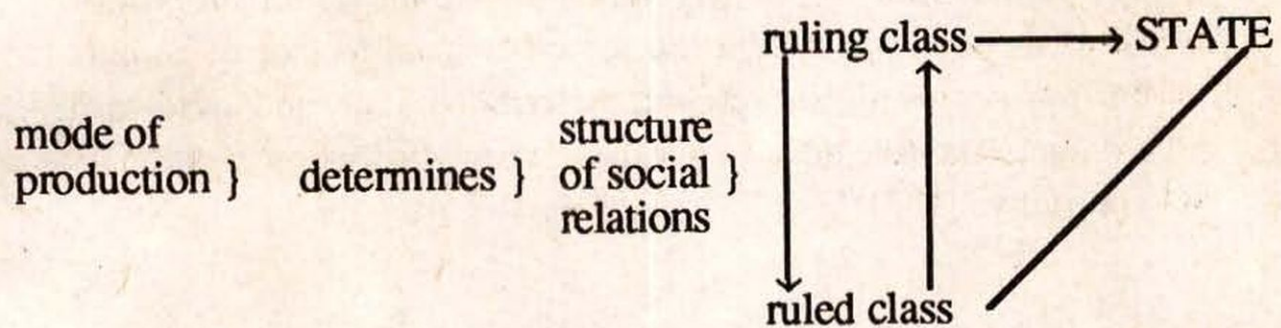
In this way, Einstein revealed a clue to the way he arrived at his great discoveries: *he always thought in concrete, physical pictures*. The mathematics, no matter how abstract or complex, always came later, mainly as a tool by which to translate these physical pictures into a precise language (emphasis mine) (Kaku, 1987:37-38).

4. Such a distinction is well stated by Kaku :

... physicists who suffer from the *mechanistic* process of thinking, often found among physicists in the West, . . . (try) to understand the inner workings of an object by examining the mechanical motions of its individual parts. Although this has produced undeniable success in isolating the laws of particular domains, this tendency blinds one from seeing the over-all picture and noticing larger patterns. This mechanistic thinking for decades prejudiced physicists against thinking in terms of unification, which Einstein had been trying to do since the 1920s (emphasis in original) (Kaku, 1987: 115).

two, the understanding of foreign policy as an element of the superstructure inextricably linked with the state structure.

Evidently, what is required at the outset is an understanding of the materiality of the superstructure. The relationship between material basis and superstructure has been in controversy ever since Marx's reformulation of the Hegelian dialectic and the concurrent theoretical assertion that ideas, values or even philosophy reflect the material world or the socio-economic basis.⁵ Many soon understood this in a very deterministic manner, more often in a line of argument that was naively economic:⁶



In the light of dialectics, such a representation remains ill-conceived and distorting. Indeed, the dialectical process of interaction, articulation, totality in motion, or what may be referred to as the 'dialectics of phenomena' is absent in any deterministic understanding

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5. As Marx pointed out in the 'Preface' to the Second Edition of *Capital* (Vol. 1): My dialectic method is not only different from the Hegelian, but is its direct opposite. To Hegel, the life process of the human brain, i.e., the process of thinking, which, under the name of 'the Idea', he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurge of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of 'the Idea'. With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought (1961 : XXX).
6. This is a modified version of A.S. Cohan's representation (1975:56).

of the relationship between material basis and superstructure. Both Marx and Engels were aware of this misrepresentation of their philosophical position, but, save a comment or two,⁷ they did very little to confront it more directly.

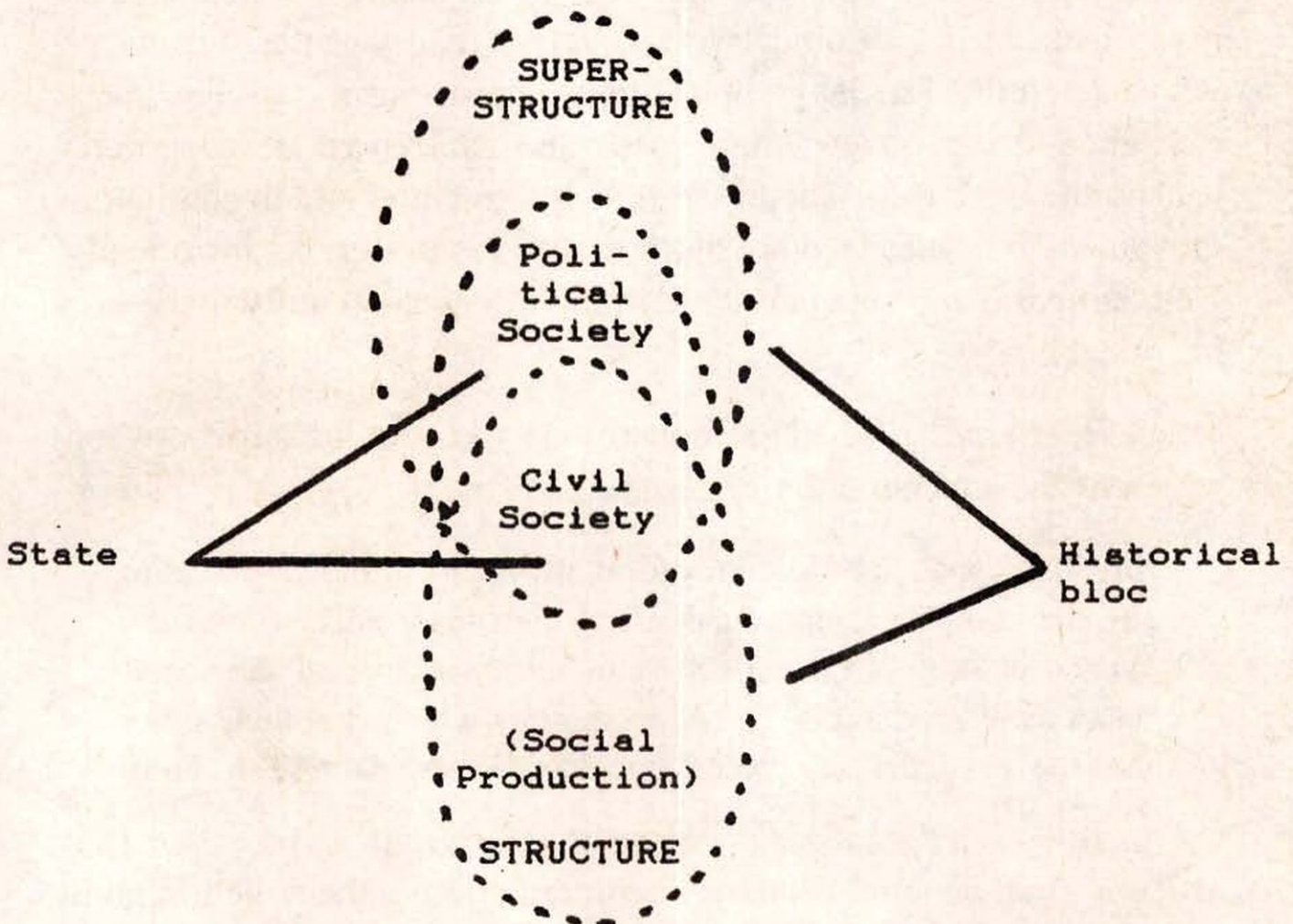
A significant contribution in this respect was made by Antonio Gramsci. He viewed the complexity of the superstructure, from a methodological standpoint, as the composition of two levels:

What we can do for the moment, is to fix two major superstructure 'levels' : the one that can be called 'civil society', that is, the ensemble of the organisms commonly called 'private' and that of 'political society' or the 'State'. These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of 'hegemony' which the dominant group exercises through society and on the other hand to that of 'direct domination' or command exercised through the State and 'juridical' government. The functions in question are precisely organizational and connective [1971:12].

7. One example of this is found in Frederick Engels' letter to Joseph Bloch:

... According to the materialist conception of history, the *ultimately* determining factor is the production and reproduction of real life. Neither Marx nor I have ever asserted more than this. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic factor is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure - political forms of the class struggle and its results, such as constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, the brains of the participants, political, legal, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas - also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases determine their *form* in particular. There is an interaction of all these elements in which, amid all the endless host of accidents ..., the economic movement is finally bound to assert itself (Marx and Engels, 1975:394-395).

The methodological distinction of the two levels is considered here from the standpoint of the dialectical unity between structure and superstructure. The following is a representation of the complexity or what can be referred to as the 'overall picture' relating to the understanding of the state :



As indicated earlier, this requires the understanding of key theoretical concepts relevant to the overall picture in the understanding of the state:

a. *Structure*. This is not something immutable, fixed, absolute, but a reality in continuous movement to be analysed not in a speculative manner, but historically (Salamini, 1981:145). The dynamics of production both in the sense of particular production and (simultaneously) production in totality, is considered here. The

relationship within and between firms, between capital and labour, the process of distribution, exchange, the possession of the means of production, extraction of surplus value, all produce a dynamic interaction within the social relations of production.

b. *Superstructure*. This is not merely an illusion, appearance or mystification, but an objective and active reality - the "terrain on which determined social groups acquire a consciousness of their social existence, their power, their roles and their own developmen"" (Salamini, 1981:145). Therefore, like the structure, it is in continuous movement to be analysed not in a speculative manner, but historically. Both structure and superstructure in their dialectical unity make up a historical bloc.

c. *Historical bloc*. This constitutes the relationship between structure and superstructure. According to Gramsci,

Structures and superstructures form an 'historical bloc'. That is to say the complex, contradictory and discordant *ensemble* of the superstructures is the reflection of the *ensemble* of the social relations of production (A) reciprocity which is nothing other than the real dialectical process (emphasis in original) (1971 : 366).

In this conceptualization three things ought to be taken into account, first, no single pattern of contradiction in the structure gives rise to the superstructure, rather the latter is the reflection of a historical conjuncture of social production. "Conjuncture" is understood here in the sense of contradictory combinations of reality.

Second, the concept is not only helpful in abstracting the relationship between structure and superstructure but also in concretizing the relationship, in uncovering the historical conjuncture of social production (that is, to describe "the way in which various classes and factions of classes are related in a situation" [Showstack, 1980:1211]).

Third, since the historical bloc is specific to the national context, in an international conjuncture, a special emphasis is placed on the national dimension as the basic unit to be analysed (Showstack, 1980:121).⁸ In our case, the understanding of this methodological priority of the national in the context of the international is important in two respects: (a) it explicitly conceptualizes the 'international conjuncture' as contradictory combinations of reality of the national in the context of the international; and (b) it takes into account the social imagination of the 'millions of subjects struggling against one another' which is always explicitly formulated at the national level.

d. *Political society*. This constitutes the coercive power exercised through the 'state' in its limited sense, i.e., the governmental apparatus of *coercion* (army, police, bureaucracy, etc.). It represents domination and control for the purpose of "assimilating the popular masses to the type of production and economy of a given period" (Femia, 1981 : 25). The modes of coercion, however, must be understood not in a fixed manner but dynamically. In this light, there are both innovative and replicating modes of coercion organized specifically in the context of hegemony.

e. *Civil society*. This constitutes the entire national society where hegemony is exercised through so-called private organizations like, political parties, trade unions, churches, educational institutions, media, cultural associations, etc. It represents *consent* in opposition to

8. A similar methodological position has also been underlined by Alain Lipietz, albeit with respect to the understanding of the globalisation of 'Fordism':

. . . in reality, struggles and institutionalized compromises tend to arise within the framework of individual nations; hence the methodological priority given to the study of each social formation in its own right (and in terms of its relations with the outside world) or, to take up the terms of an old debate, to *the primacy of internal causes* (emphasis in original) (1987:22).

coercion of the political society. Gramsci reminds us that this consent is historically arrived at by the prestige (and the concurrent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production (Femia, 1981). Moreover, it is only by having this consent in the civil society that a social group can be hegemonic and thereby win governmental power. As Gramsci pointed out:

A social group can, and indeed must, already 'lead' before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principal conditions for the winning of such power) (1971:47).

Any failure to achieve such hegemony means a crisis of authority with a disturbing impact on the role of the state, both internal and external. Internally, this means that coercion is required to achieve the consent of the population (otherwise the state faces civil war, revolution, etc.) and externally this means that a divided society is not in a position to take a firm stand against its adversaries (whether they are aid agencies, multinationals or military incursions).

The role of the "organic intellectuals" is central here. Indeed, the role of the latter is peculiar to every society since an independent class of intellectual does not exist, but rather every social group has its own intellectuals. Thomas Bates has nicely paraphrased this Gramscian contention:

Civil society is the market place of ideas, where intellectuals enter as 'salesmen' of contending cultures. The intellectuals succeed in creating hegemony to the extent that they extend the world view of the rulers to the ruled, and thereby secure the 'free' consent of the masses to the law and order of the land. To the extent that the intellectuals fail to create hegemony, the ruling class falls back on the state's coercive apparatus which disciplines those who do not 'consent' (1975 : 353).

It is important to point out here that within each society the general characteristics of the organic intellectuals may differ considerably, ranging from ecclesiastical intellectuals organically bound to the landed aristocracy to bureaucrats and secularized scholars and philosophers organically bound to the industrial system (Gramsci, 1971:7). Each category of organic intellectuals attempts to create its own vision of the world.

The specific activities of the organic intellectuals in the civil society require further elaboration. In so far as these intellectuals are related to a particular social group or class, they tend to organize and reproduce the world-view of that particular social group or class by participating in each and every social activity of that society. Intellectuals taking part in such activities, however, have both particular and general features. As Gramsci pointed out with respect to the role of the intellectuals in a political party:

An intellectual who joins the political party of a particular social group is merged with the organic intellectuals of the group itself, and is linked tightly with the group. This takes place through participation in the life of the state only to a limited degree and often not at all

That all members of a political party should be regarded as intellectuals is an affirmation that can easily lend itself to mockery and caricature. But if one thinks about it nothing could be more exact. There are of course distinctions of level to be made. A party might have a greater or lesser proportion of members in the higher grades or in the lower, but this is not the point. What matters is the function, which is directive and organisational, i.e. educative i.e. intellectual [(1971) 1989:16].

The role of the organic intellectuals, however, is not limited to a political party alone. Gramsci points out that the state, when it wants to initiate an unpopular action or policy, creates in advance a suitable,

appropriate, public opinion, that is, it organizes and centralizes certain elements of civil society (Femia, 1981:27). The use of mass media is very effective in the process. The ties may not always be governmental. Femia describes Gramsci's position here:

The crucial point is that governments can often mobilize the support of the mass media and other ideological instruments, partly because the various elites, political or otherwise, share similar world-views and life-styles, and partly because the institutions of civil society, whether or not they are directly controlled by the state, must operate within a legal framework of rules and regulations (1981:27).

The modes of consent here must be understood, like the modes of coercion, not in a fixed manner but dynamically. Mass media, for example, often constitute 'real political parties' in the event of the latter's weakness in civil society (Gramsci 1985:386-425). This otherwise relates to the qualitative transformation of the role not only of the mass media but importantly also of the political party. Mass media, in this context, may share the task of reproducing hegemony, when vital interests are at stake for the dominant class as a whole or a faction of the class in the reproduction of hegemony. In this respect, mass media often back a particular political party to the extent of downplaying its social weaknesses, a feature which often proves favourable to the task of reproducing hegemony.

Similarly, a religious institution in so far as it influences public opinion must be viewed not merely in the context of its original mission but equally so in the context of its place in contemporary social dynamics. One is thereby able to see not only the changing roles of the religious institution in the context of its original mission but also in its involvement in the changing pattern of the modes of consent related to the organization of hegemony. Needless to say, as with the

modes of coercion, there are both innovative and replicating modes of consent organized specifically with respect to hegemony.

Civil society, however, in as much as it is a ground for organizing hegemony, is simultaneously a ground for developing and organizing counter-hegemony. In this context, the Gramscian contention that "the intellectual succeed in creating hegemony to the extent that they extend the world-view of the rulers to the ruled" (Bates, 1975:353) must be understood by presupposing, albeit from the standpoint of dialectics, two things: first, the existence of a ruled class in relation to the power of the ruling class; and second, the development of counter-hegemony in relation to the organization and reproduction of hegemony. In light of its subalternity, however, such counter-hegemony remains at a rudimentary stage and is difficult to identify. Moreover, counter-hegemony remains conditional on it being interpreted in terms of its relationship with hegemony, a fact which probably indicates as to why we hear more about the ruling class and less or none about the ruled class or the subaltern social forces (Guha, 1983, 1885).

Hegemony, however, as we have pointed out, is organized not only through consent but also coercion. This, if anything, reflects the inability of the ruling class to resolve fundamental contradictions in the society. As a rule, coercion becomes necessary to deter counter-hegemonic challenges - labour unrest, land grabbing, spontaneous movements, not to mention organized agrarian and industrial strikes for better wages or price controls. All such activities, even the spontaneous ones, occur through some form of 'conscious leadership' [Gramsci (1971) 1989:196], which only indicates the constitution and development of counter-hegemony. In this context, even the critics of hegemony, although not necessarily organically related to the subaltern social forces, become actively involved in the task of organizing a counter-hegemony.

f. *State*. It is important to understand here that the distinction between civil and political societies is only a methodological one and not an actual state of fact. Both together in their complexity constitute the state. In this sense, for example, not only is the state dominant in mercantilism but also in a laissez-faire economy. That is, in so far as both civil and political societies constitute the state, the economy of laissez-faire, while belonging to civil society, remains a form of state regulation - "introduced and maintained by legislative and coercive means" (Gramsci, 1971:160).

The state is, therefore, "the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules" (Gramsci, 1971:244). This can be represented as state = political society + civil society, which is, hegemony protected by the armour of coercion (Gramsci, 1971:263).

It is only by understanding this hegemonic dimension of the state that its policies, both internal and external can be explained. The external dimension (or what can be referred to as the national - international dimension) of the state, however, requires further exposition. This we shall do by extending logically (i.e. in the sense of having valid connection or interrelation), Gramsci's theoretical formulation of state, keeping in mind here that Gramsci concentrated only on the understanding of state and not on the understanding of the relationship between state and foreign policy.

National-International Dimension of the State

We have already indicated earlier that in an international conjuncture the national dimension remains the basic unit of analysis. Gramsci is explicit on this :

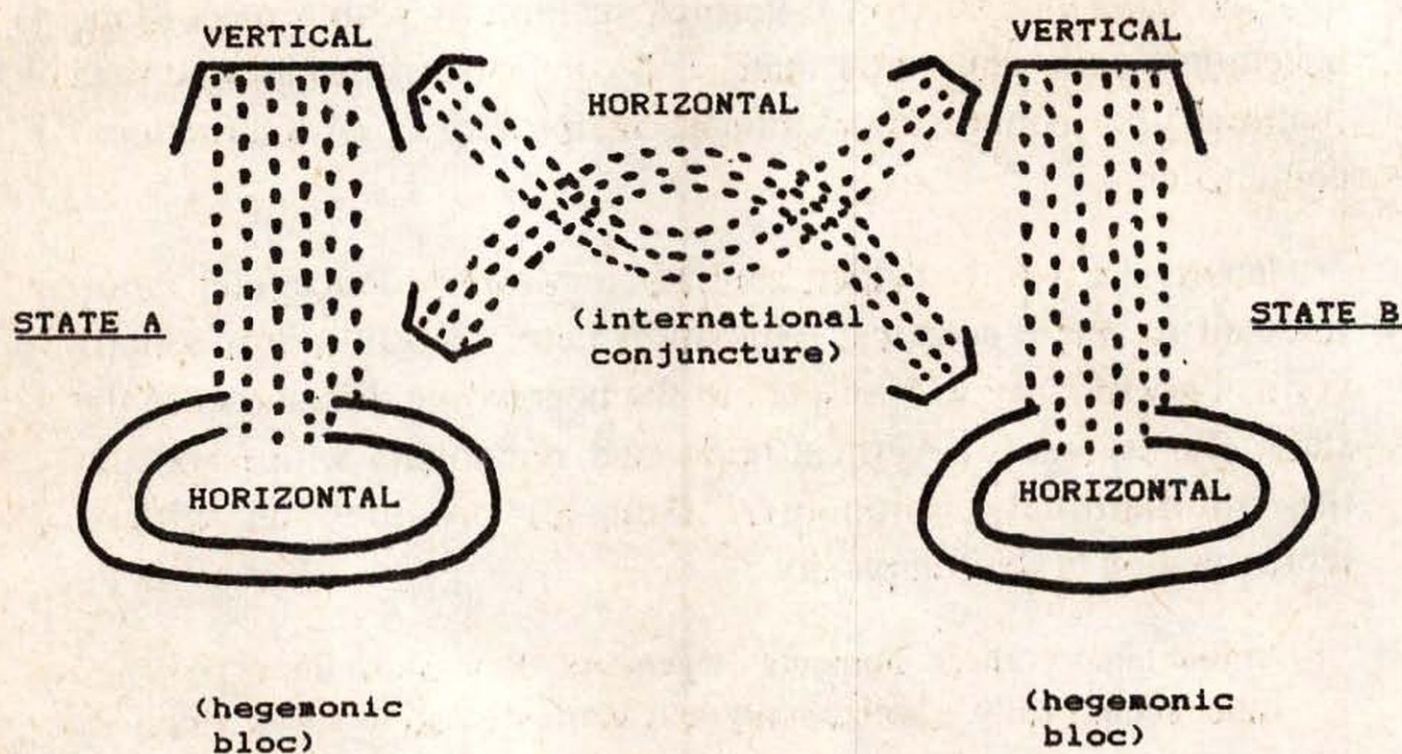
Do international relations precede or follow (logically) fundamental social relations ? There can be no doubt that they follow. Any organic innovation in the social structure, through its technical - military expressions, modifies organically absolute and relative relations in the international field too. Even the geographical position of a national state does not precede but follows (logically) structural changes, although it also reacts back upon them to a certain extent (to the extent precisely to which superstructures react upon the structure, politics on economic, etc.) (1971:177).

In the light of the theoretical projection of the understanding of the state, particularly with respect to the methodological priority of the national in the context of the international, the national-international dimension can be said to follow logically from the dimension that Gramsci calls the 'horizontal-vertical' reciprocity with respect to the hegemonic dimension of the state. This can be described as a 'vertical (national)-horizontal (international)' reciprocity in an international conjuncture.

There is a two-fold albeit contradictory binary conceptualization relevant to our theoretical exposition here. One is a 'horizontal-vertical' reciprocity with respect to the hegemonic dimension of the state. The second is a 'vertical-horizontal' reciprocity with respect to the international conjuncture. Gramsci provides us with a representation of the complexity :

In real history these moments (hegemonic dimension) imply each other reciprocally - horizontally and vertically, so to speak - i.e. according to socio-economic activity (horizontally) and to country (vertically), combining and diverging in various ways. Each of these combinations may be represented by its own organized economic and political expression. It is also necessary to take account the fact that international relations intertwine with these internal relations of nation-states, creating new, unique and historically concrete combination (1971:182).

That is, while the 'horizontal-vertical' reciprocity can be referred to in the context of the internal or national dimension, in the context of the national-international (or internal-external) dimension such a reciprocity, if it is to make any sense, must necessarily be transposed from one of 'horizontal-vertical' reciprocity to its opposite, a 'vertical-horizontal' reciprocity. The latter follows logically from the former. To give one example, while the states (i. e., as 'independent states') are engaged in socio-economic activity (horizontally), they are also engaged simultaneously (of course, with qualitative differences and results) in the modes of exploitation and domination (vertically). The following is a representation of the overall picture of the reciprocity of the national-international (or internal-external) dimension of a state:



Both reciprocities (the 'horizontal-vertical' and the 'vertical-horizontal'), like the modes of consent and coercion, must be understood not in a fixed manner but dynamically. This implies that the social forces active in the task of reproducing the social reality, either innovatively or by replication, must like wise reproduce

(innovatively or by replication) a reciprocity related not only to the state but also to the state's national-international dimension.

There is also a second critical element to this dynamic and that is to view *issues* related to the external dimension of the state as 'moments in dynamics'. This follows logically from the dynamics related to the hegemonic dimension of the state (i.e. the dynamic nature of the modes of coercion and consent) and the state's national-international dimension (i.e. the dynamic nature of the reciprocities of the 'horizontal-vertical' and the 'vertical-horizontal'). In this light, the issues are themselves conditional, temporary, relative, representing contradictions in reality - the nature of which can only be understood by demystifying them.

But how do we go about analysing the foreign policy of a state in an international conjuncture which is inclusive of states of varied levels, both in the sense of quantity and quality (i.e. with respect to both material and moral strength)? Indeed, once we begin to focus on a 'vertical-horizontal' reciprocity in an international conjuncture it becomes necessary to consider the strength (material and moral) of the 'horizontal-vertical' reciprocity of the state relative to that of the other states. And in so far as the 'vertical-horizontal' reciprocity of one country or a combination of countries in an international conjuncture remains relatively powerful (material and moral), it is bound to influence the less powerful in any kind of relationship between the two (this is with respect to contents related to both material basis and superstructure). Gramsci gives us a revealing example :

A particular ideology, for instance, born in a highly developed country, is disseminated in less developed countries, impinging on the local interplay of combinations. (Religion had always been a source of such national and international ideological combinations.) (1971:182).

But critically such a relationship can only be organized in accordance with the local interplay of combinations of the state concerned. In this sense, the influence of the powerful deepens when there is a hegemonic dimension in the powerful state and simultaneously when the less developed country remains a divided society without the hegemonic dimension of the state. On the other hand, the condition may be reversed by the absence and presence of such a dimension in the powerful and less powerful state respectively. In this respect, the struggles of millions of subject in both developed and less developed countries remain crucial in the reproduction of the structural configuration of a given international conjuncture.

The foreign policy of a state, therefore, is not at all divorced from the population. Rather the state pursues it by gaining the consent of the masses, both with respect to the national and national-international dimensions. This consent, no doubt, involves a reciprocity between political and civil societies, with the hegemonic state often organizing and centralizing certain elements of civil society. At the same time, civil society reflects upon the action of political society. In sum, from a methodological standpoint, the foreign policy of a state can be represented as the combination of the contradictory realities not only of political and civil societies but also (indeed simultaneously) of the vertical-horizontal reciprocity in an international conjuncture. Thus constitution of hegemony involves national and international dimensions.

Concluding Observations

To sum up the discussion then, the dialectical understanding of relationship between state and foreign policy remains critical in several respects.

First, the domain of foreign policy, although apparently under the control of the various factions of the ruling class, is not devoid of

influences and participations of the ruled class. The recognition of this aspect is critical for understanding not only the reproduction of hegemony but also the organization of counter-hegemony. While in the case of the former one is able to identify the various foreign policy actions (from establishing diplomatic relations to trading) with which the ruling class is able to organize consent among the masses and reproduce the rule of the dominant social forces, in the case of the latter one is directed towards the task of innovating foreign policy goals (from denuclearized world to national and international disarmament) favourable to the dominated social forces. Indeed, like domestic politics, foreign policy also contributes to the task of organizing hegemony, it reflects the imaginations and struggles of both ruling and ruled classes.

Second, the qualitative changes in the organization of foreign policy may not always arise from the qualitative changes in state power. In fact, the power of the latter to influence the former is not automatic and must not be understood in a simple linear fashion. What is required here is the construction of innovative goals (with respect to both state power and foreign policy), ones which would refrain the party in power from reproducing the old discarded structure. This is particularly important for those who are bent upon organizing a counter-hegemony favourable to the masses. To take one example, the collapse of the Soviet Union was partly due to its failure to innovate foreign policy goals, which, in fact, at a later period simply reflected the foreign policy of the other Superpower, namely the United States. That the goals of 'socialism' and 'superpower' are antithetical to each other (which in the case of 'capitalism' is not so) missed the minds (that is, until the arrival of Gorbachev and *Perestroika*) of those who were constructing socialism in the Soviet Union. In this light, the failure of the socialist agenda in the Soviet Union has both internal and external dimensions.

Finally, the positivist mode of knowledge and knowledge-production, that is, the penchant for observable facts and separate and isolated research, is directly challenged. Apart from being theoretically significant, this matter is also politically relevant. From the standpoint of theoretical construction, separate and isolated research poses serious limits to the understanding of reality, while politically such an approach creates obstacles to the task of organizing an all-out struggle to transform reality. The dialectical understanding of the relationship between state and foreign policy, for that matter, while demystifying the appearance of things, organizes praxis with respect to both hegemony and counter-hegemony. Put differently, it stands to caution against the compartmentalization of disciplines and the distortion of reality and to seek instead to project the dialectical, as well as social and political, relationships existing between the disciplines. The recognition of such a relationship is critical to the task of understanding and transforming reality.

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