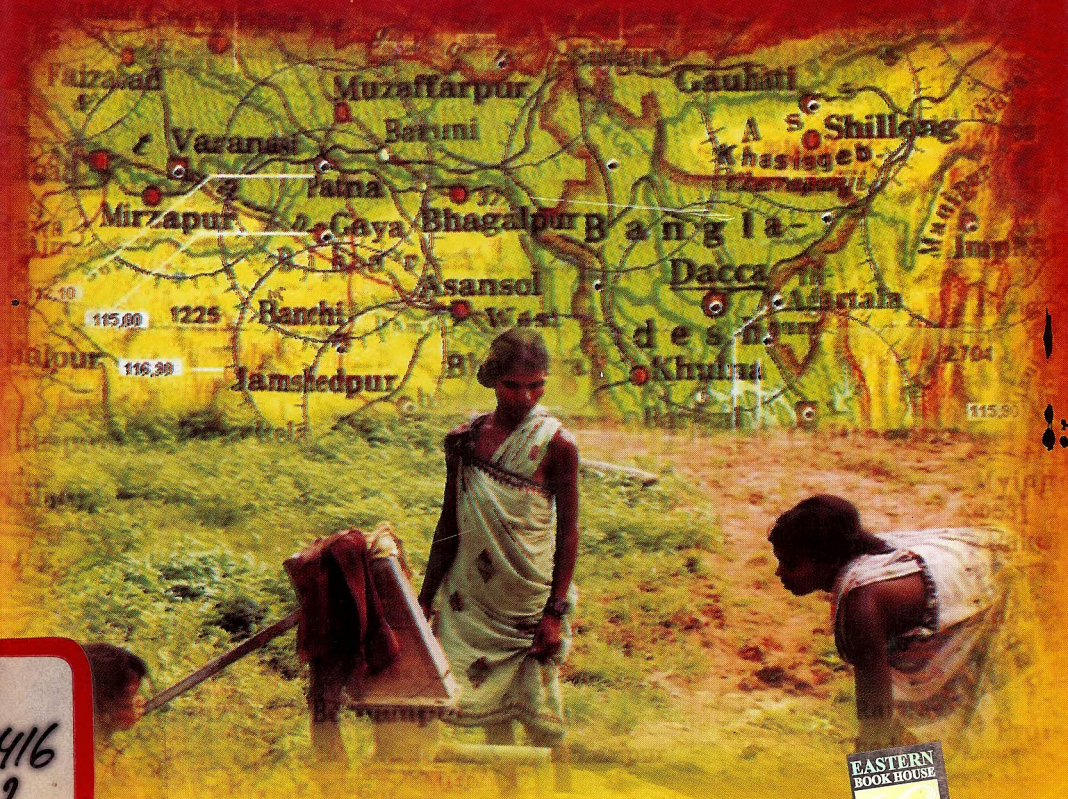


POLITICAL ECONOMY OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EAST INDIA



RAFIUL AHMED
PRASENJIT BISWAS

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Development Research focusing on North-East India (NEI) seems to be limited by isolated and piecemeal nature of empirical studies. This situation throws up a challenge to investigate into the causal and historical linkages between politics and economics.

Taking into consideration the existing lacunae in development research focusing on NEI, the study investigates the nature and causes of underdevelopment and its myriad politico-cultural expressions through the triple registers of development i.e. Political Economy, Space and Culture.

The study delves deep into the analysis of the intricate structural relations within a given mode of production that produces, sustains and gives rise to neo-dependency. In doing so it tries to develop a staged connection between the co-existing modes of development and modes of productions alongwith its spatial references.

The study remains largely exploratory and theoretical. Recent data have been used to strengthen various arguments.

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***For My Friend
and
Philosopher
TAUHID***



There Was Life There One, and Joy in Recreation,
Dancing and Laughter, Love Among The Trees,
But Little Now Save Sullen Speculation
Of What the Future Has and Where it Leads

—*Verrier Elwin (1902-64)*

Preface

The problem of Underdevelopment in North-East India (NEI) assumes a complex political and cultural form. In concrete Political Economy terms development is both related to a prevalent mode of production as well as reproduction of social relations of production. Therefore, the political economy of underdevelopment takes into account the social relations of production and its genesis in a given system of production. NEI being the cultural and economic periphery of India's mainland exhibit relationship of dependency between the modes of production prevalent in NEI and the modes of production prevalent in the larger domain of India's economy. The clinching evidence for this dependency relation lies in the fact that NEI acts as a supplier of raw material for the mainland and in turn receives investment in finished goods from the mainland. This process of resource use and expansion of market to NEI results into a grand process of social and political homogenization. But economic processes cannot fully appropriate NEI into the fold of Indian market rather it increases the already existing social and cultural differentiation by way of developing neo-elites as the allies of Indian Capital. This relationship with the Indian Capital does not ensure the self-determination of NEI. Rather it provides the space for operation of the Indian Capital.

This instrumental rendering of NEI into an ally and a supportive market of Indian Capital gives rise to dominant ideology of subsumption of regional identities within the fold of the national pan-Indian identity. But such subsumption produces its own antithesis in the form of assertion of multiple smaller ethnic and linguistic identities that clamor for their distinct self-definition and politico-territorial self-determination. This shows that politically constructed identities resist the processes of dominance and homogenization. Such resistance is articulated in praxis and in actual struggle for survival and sustenance. In terms of 'Political Economy', with the rise of dependency between NEI and the mainland India, there has been a corresponding rise of resistance as its dialectical counterpart.

In the case of NEI the most important and major linguistic identity is the *Assamese* identity but in a narrow sense such identities are resistant

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as well as yielding. The construction of *Bodo* identity for e.g. would mobilize the support of *Bodo* ethnic elites while it could not master support from civil society in Assam in general. This work takes into account how such identities represent live the conflicts endemic in the structure and how the structure of reproduction shape identities that are in a state of conflict and contest.

Further it is argued that what follows from dependency relationship is a subperipheralization i.e., creation of peripheries within peripheries. As these periperipheries within peripheries stand in a dialectical relationship with peripheries that play the role of local centers, there is a privileged positioning of social identities in those centers, from where they extend their influence on subperipheries. On the one hand such identities draw their Counterhegemonic strength by moving against the metropolitan centers while they would extend their hold on their immediate neighbourhood. As resources would move from subperipheries to local centers and from local centers to metropolitan centers, formation of identities act as a linkage as well as sever the linkage between subperiphery and metropolitan centers of India. This simultaneous linkage and delinking between subperipheries and metropolis could be conceived as a form of *neo-dependency* that allows subperipheries a relative autonomy and draw from them and yet extend its influence on subperipheries to maintain a permanence of the process of surplus extraction.

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Finally, we all hear about the magic moments of MPhil. (Planning and Development) when for a time economists, geographers, sociologists and people from other background come together around central issues and common questions. At those times, the spirit of inquiry kindles the spirit of discovery. In this process many are involved, only few can be explicitly acknowledged, but all can be thanked.

Rafiul Ahmed

Prasenjit Biswas

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Introduction, the Problem and Approach

Introduction

The North-East India (NEI) lies in the cultural periphery of India and it is a distinctive region in terms of its physiography, climate, topography, vegetation and social and cultural formations. The whole region is situated between the 69 degree 40 E and 97 degree 37 E and is connected with rest of India by a narrow strip of land through northern part of Bengal. Based on the physical features the regions embody mountains, hills and plateaus. The sub-tropical location of the region gives rise to different kinds of flora and fauna. The Monsoon showers almost all parts of the region. As the subsistence agriculture depends heavily on the Monsoon it can be called as the backbone of the economy. Agriculture is the prime activity and major contributor to the economy of North- East states but it is not highly mechanized. The region is one of the most industrially backward regions. In the presence of several constraints it has not been able to contribute significantly to the domestic production. Although the region shows tremendous multiplicity in terms of language, caste, race, religion, ethnic groups there are common features, which is distinctive from the rest of the country. The tribal people dominate the hilly area while the non-tribal people dominate the valleys. Most of the states of the NEI have high percentage of tribal population. However one cannot compare them with the traditional stereotype found in the mainland. For example Mizos have achieved high literacy rate of (90%). The centripetal and the centrifugal forces have shaped the Polity of the region historically. However, in the case of NEI there has been a predominance of the former on the later. In this beautiful corridor between two great civilizations of the Chinese and the Indian, the creative endeavors of generations of people of this enchanted land have strengthened the

forces of pluralism and fusion of harmony among the forces of different faiths. The diverse ethnic origins of the people inhabiting this difficult and tortuous terrain naturally led to the growth of centrifugal forces, directly stemming from various ways of living, different forms of worship and separate dialects. Over the years, there emerged a cultural commonality, which greatly contributed to the social cohesion. The Eastern Himalayas and the river Brahmaputra has greater influence on the life of the people of the region. The legends, myths, folklores and the customs of the area are woven with those of the rest of India as they developed cross-cultural communication.

What is culturally important about the region is a tremendous diversity of languages and dialects estimated at some 400 odd numbers. The linguistic origins could be traced back to the Indo-Austic, Mon Khmer, Indo-Tibetan, Tibeto Burman and of course Indo-Aryan group of languages. The linguistic diversity of the region is the root of the ethnic diversity. The ethnic diversity could be charted out in roughly 120 scheduled tribes in the region, while the each of these tribes have several sub-tribes, clans and kinship ties. The linguistic and ethnic diversity assumes an architectonic form, as one can trace a continuum from clan to tribe to ethnicity to nationality. For example major tribes of the region bear a generic name such as *Naga*, *Mizo* etc. *Naga* in particular comprises of some 22 sub-tribes, each of which could again be divided into clans and kinship markers. *Mizos* too consider themselves as a part of larger generic identity called 'Zo' which is constituted by tribes who trace their origin to *Sinlung*, a place somewhere in south-west China. Apart from such ethnic configurations by the tribes, ethnicity also comprise of generic linguistic and religious identity. The generic linguistic identity called Assamese connotes sharing of Assamese language by *Vaishnavaites*, *Sankardevaites*, *Muslims*, *Ahoms*, and migrants, hill and plain tribes of Assam all coalesced into the name Assamese. Each such generic members, therefore, has a substratum of plurality and diversity that cohere but do not collapse the specific terms of reference.

Such a diversity has given rise to historical and political forces that mutually collaborate and contradict yet preserve the substratum of diversity in a holistic presence of region. During the pre-colonial, colonial and the post-colonial period there have been state formations of distinct kinds. Three dominant models during pre-British were 1) politics that followed Hinduism as the religion of 'royal legitimation'

e.g. *Meitees, Jaintias, Dimasas and Tripures, Chakmas*, etc. 2) The Buddhist polities such as *Chakmas, Khamtis, Nokte, Dukpa* etc. 3) The tribals and animist polities such as Ahoms and Khasis. The institutions of chieftainship also prevailed among a number of incipient state formations such as *Lushai, Angami, Konyak, Aos* and others. Such diverse political formations of the pre-colonial era presented a difficult situation. When the Britishers intended to establish their governance in NEI what they did was to establish an umbrella authority over the local institutions of rule throughout the first and second half the nineteenth century. The British state followed a pattern of punitive expedition in the case of tribes of Naga and Mizo Hills. In the case of plains of Assam it established the headquarters of the government around 1826 from where it extended its areas of influence. But the bottom line of British administration was non-interference in the social modes of tribal life. This British policy amounted to an indirect rule whereby the British authorities acted as a mediating agency and established a kind of regulative authority over the hill tribes of North-East India.

This policy of non-interference resulted into a two-fold political process. On one the hand it allowed the freedom of conducting the affairs of tribal life to the tribes themselves. On the other hand it imposed a kind of strict neutrality on the British state. Such a mix between autonomy to the tribals and neutrality of the British state avoided the path of confrontation and it prevented the influence of mainstream political movement on the hill tribes.

The British regime established Inner Line Regulation over Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh in 1872-73. This Inner Line Regulation got further legitimized in government of India Act of 1935 which divided the whole hill areas of NEI into 'excluded' and 'partially excluded' categories. The purpose of such restrictive regulation was to ensure non-interference from people of the plains as well as carve out an area of unimpeded self-development for the tribes of the regions. The post-colonial Indian state continued with the Inner Line Regulation within the Nehruvian policy framework, which also has a component of leaving the tribes themselves. What is to be noted here is that starting from pre-colonial era to colonial and post-colonial era there has been recognition of specific tribal and ethnic identities through the policies of the state. But such a policy was not complemented with adequate support of capability building in the region. Rather the policy of pursuing development through political concessions and funding

from the Centre have drawn the region into the fold of nation-building process that sharpened the difference and unevenness between levels of progress as obtained at the national and the regional plane.

Looking into the contemporary forms of social and political struggle emerging from NEI one would surmise about some of the major problems that inflict the region. Located in a complex geo-political interface the region has been affected by the demographic consequences of partition. The steady flow of immigrants and refugees across the border resulted into a kind of ethnic outburst throughout 60s and 70s. One of the running themes of ethnic struggle of the region is devoted to the influx of foreigners, which has been made into the cause for development at lacks. Further, the issue of influx has been pitted against the problem of inequitable distribution and thereby such an issue thwarted more urgent issues of economic struggle. The ever-widening class difference and dis-empowerment of rural and tribal masses and the backwash effects of development in the metropolis were stumped under the bogie of influx and thereby hampering the processes of cultural integration. One would further say that lack of development compounded with ethnic difference posed severe constraint on the possibilities of attaining legitimate political and economic aspirations towards which ethnic mobilization were directed to. Such non-fulfillment of various legitimate concerns alienated large sections of ethnic communities of NEI. It clearly demonstrate the fact that the Nehruvian policy leaving them alone did not ensure appropriate self-development. So also the role of the Indian State was far less than satisfactory.

The administration of welfare throughout the functioning of various state and local level institutions assumed an elitist and bureaucratic form. Assam, the largest conglomeration of hill and plane areas were had to be divided into other smaller states as it was not possible to fulfill the minimal aspirations of various ethnic communities. Mizo Hill District experienced terrible famine between 1952-56 giving rise to three decade long insurgency. Such insurgencies have forced the Indian State to carve out areas of Assam and states like Nagaland (1963), Mizoram and Meghalaya (1972) were created. Such carving out of the states was a restatement of self-development for the tribes, but the machinery and the state governance could not fully attain such a goal. Especially the goal of welfare could not have been achieved with underutilization of funds and resources leading to a kind of underdevelopment of such newly formed states. The governmental machinery created only a top-

down administration within which the local self-governance and traditional institutions of various tribes could retain a nominal presence. Rather it gave rise to an intense conflict between traditional institutions and state government leading to an unaccountable condition of development.

If one looks into the environmental niches that traditionally sustained the livelihood practices of the various tribes of the region one would encounter a conflict between nature and culture. While ethnographers and anthropologist have emphasized on preservation of ethnic and natural styles of living, the politicians and planners have asked for larger public investments. There were clear divergences of goals, whether to pursue the path of model institutional development or strengthen the resource bases of the communities became an either-or question. As the choice of development was not left to the people themselves but was delivered by the statist agencies it has led to an absence of well-defined goals of development. The whole of the region promises to hold indigenous ways of development that are somehow scuttled and continued by various exogenous forces. As the resource base of the region is gradually weaned away it had produced a displacement of communities from their life world while introduction of various other ways of life could not involve a sustainable process of balanced growth.

Political Economy of Underdevelopment

Modes of Production and Development

Patnaik (1973) in his article "On the Political Economy of Underdevelopment" sheds light on the development of capitalistic economy in the Indian subcontinent and the concomitant process of accumulation thus creating development in the metropolis and underdevelopment in the periphery. In this exclusive paper Patnaik not only traces the historical genesis of underdevelopment and the process of capitalistic development but also the contradictions generated as a result of the dissolution of the old mode of production.

He argues in the essay that capitalistic development took place in India essentially through the process of primary accumulation. It was mainly by appropriating petty producers of a particular group in whose hands the means of production and subsistence were accumulated and the large masses were left to sell their labour power. A market was

provided for the products of the new mode within which “these two groups came face to face.” Historically, this happened through a process in which the pre-capitalistic producers were separated from the means of production and a process of appropriation or possession by a few of the things so appropriated.

This process of “primary accumulation” involved the state apparatus and the use of force to set the mode of production on its feet and simultaneously to provide it with a market. Once on its feet, the capitalistic production relied to greater extent on internal appropriation of surplus value. Primary accumulation in one sense continued side-by-side with accumulation and production for internal market, which petty producers have expropriated continuously. The chief motive force behind the capitalistic production relied on three elements i.e. accumulation, concentration and centralization.

The offshoot of the above process gave rise to two separate tendencies; firstly, the constant expropriation of the many by few created a “surplus population”, a mass of unemployed and underemployed pauperized producers, secondly, the capital developed by this process tended to be geographically unevenly distributed owing to the existence of “external economies”. Thus the overall impact of the process was underdevelopment in the periphery and development in the metropolis; the later characterized by integration into world trade as primary producers and the existence of a “surplus population” which had to survive at its best it could. This entire process of development and underdevelopment took place at an international level through the medium of a colonial state or “comprador state”. —

However, liberation movement challenged this pattern of change in the “peripheral” countries, in many of which the national bourgeoisie emerged as the dominant force. In its effort to start an indigenous capitalistic development the “national bourgeoisie” faced certain unique problems —i) it had no colonies left to acquire ii) simultaneously having been colonized it inherited a far poorer country. The population growth was constantly making matters worse iii) it also arrived at a time when the world capitalistic system was politically challenged iv) finally with all this failings, the liberation movement could not make it capable of the task.

At this juncture, Patnaik argues that the “national bourgeoisie” because of these drawbacks allied itself with the landlords and after

some patchy land reforms settled down to the business of providing a sort of "rural capitalism" from above. However, the typical political instinct of "national bourgeoisie" precluded it to take bold measure like using vast mass of unutilized labour for capital formation. As the surplus value generated within the tiny capitalistic sector was inadequate, primary accumulation had to supplement it and took the form of drastic squeeze on the consumption of the masses i.e. the labourers. Moreover, where the resulting development was concentrated in a certain region, the old metropolis-periphery relationship was reproduced within the country.

What stands out is that with the rising consumption of the bourgeoisie and the landlords the primary accumulation became inadequate and capital had to be borrowed from metropolitan centres. As a result, the national bourgeoisie had to realign itself with the metropolitan bourgeoisie soon after the independence on different terms and different levels. The continued borrowing sapped the foundation of the bourgeoisie programme of independent national development. It was under pressure to dismantle the system of trade and foreign capital, which had developed since independence and in several cases, succumbed to the pressure at least partially. The same contradictions can also be drawn from the political developments wherein on one hand the government talks about the opening up of the economy to the market forces and in another hand it makes legislation for the decentralization of the planning process.

What emerges from this global political economy of Underdevelopment is the systemic growth of peripheries and a steady process of accumulation at the cost of peripheries that not only happened internationally, but also was supplemented within a geopolitical region, reproducing and mimicking what happened at the global scale. But one has to understand the specifics of Capital formation and especially how formation of capital brought in a regimen of control over factors of production.

Bagchi (1998) makes an attempt to analyse the nature of colonial enterprises in India in order to trace the processes of primary accumulation and its impact on labourers who constitute the "subjects" of development. Bagchi presents the cases of indigo cultivation, sugar industry and the textile industry during the colonial period in India, where he witnessed retardation of productive forces and relative emboldening of the regressive labor process. He identifies coercive labour employment as the prominent feature of capitalistic enterprise in

India. In this process all the players such as the British govt., the Zamindars and the moneylenders acted harmoniously. Not only this, other factors like relative roles of ideology, clan systems and the market system played important role in maintaining the super ordinate force of sahibs on sustaining the coercion of the laborers. This very system of joint coercion and subsequent destruction of alternative employment opportunities had a depressive effect on the forces of production. The whole mechanism reduced the nominally free peasants to a condition of abject dependence on the *Zamindars* and the European planters.

The influence of colonialism went beyond the coercive method of labour control. In case of manufacture of textiles influence of colonialism and land-lordism was felt in the behavior of labour, choice of technique and the spread of adoption and diffusion of technical change. The very methods of labour control –physical coercion, intimidation by jobbers and the absorption of the superior powers in every way to the colour of the skin militated against many needed changes, such as the induction of the technically qualified Indians in supervisory positions.

The nature of capitalistic enterprise is not just bound by coercion, but also is based on the ideological underpinnings involved in strengthening or undermining the existing power relations of the producers in general in the countryside in different regions of India. With reference to this particular point he feels that to answer this ideological and institutional aspects of the working of colonialism in tandem with the residues, transformers or surrogates of the pre-colonial heritage in all relevant areas to be studied together with the single fact of colonialism in India as a system of exploitation of people of a geographically defined area with definite ethnic and cultural characteristics.

Both Bagchi's and Patanaik's works find their reverberations in Amaledu Guha's *Planter's Raj to Swaraj*(1977) that deals with the dominant labour processes of migratory labour forces, who are put to the task of running Capitalist tea enterprises in large areas of North East India. The work clearly shows that how the tea industry drew upon the labour force from the regions of the country which are impoverished due to surplus extraction and primary accumulation. Further Guha showed how extraction of surplus from tea industry resulted into a kind of pre-capitalist production relation between planters and labourers extended to other sectors of the economy by the British State. So tea industries as colonial capitalist enterprises established a pre-capitalist mode of

exploitation of labour, while it produced surplus for the whole of colonial state. One can add to the study made by Sanjib Baruah in his piece entitled, "Clash of Resource Use Regimes in Colonial Assam: A Nineteenth Century Puzzle Revisited" shows how transfer of surplus of the tea industry to the mainland and further to England resulted into a severe contradiction between *two* types of resource use: *gathering of natural resources* by the indigenous people of the region versus *settled cultivation used for transfer of resources for economic purposes* giving benefits to settlers. Such settled cultivation that had existed in tea cultivation subsequently got extended to all areas of cultivation. As a result the concept of a settled workforce and the rationale of making profits through commercial transfer of resources caused a premature annihilation of shifting cultivation of the pre-colonial days and introduced new relations of production between settlers and settled cultivators, both of which acted as agents of transfer of resources within British entrepreneurial system. The paradox is that, within colonialism these settled cultivators didn't have the right over means of production and as they were instrumental in marginalizing the practice of shifting cultivation done by the indigene populace, they became the unconscious perpetuators of a system of owning land permanently and thereby introducing a compulsive attachment to land, even if it is unproductive. Such new land relations alienated the natives from the collective nature of cultivation by the community and also from collective use of land resulting into the colonial pattern of fragmentation in land that made holding of land meaningless even if it is held by local populace.

Further, studies on the nature of indentured labour system pointed out how the planter's control over indentured labourers effected a regime of control over means of production in which mere ownership didn't matter, what mattered is the control over modes of production by way of a structure of contract between factors of production and costs of production. Mostly it was done through control of land and labour, markers of pre-capitalists modes of production brought under Capitalist methods of control through ownership and contract. Similarly, Dasgupta (1983) in her case of study of plantation economy of the Brahmaputra valley examines the capitalistic modes of production in Assam. She notes that the colonial ruler enjoyed a monopoly in the wastelands of the valley through various legislations for leasing and revenue from the land. The colonial ruler imposed heavy taxes to the agricultural lands. These kinds of policies led to the land alienation of tribes like the *Singphos*.

Such regimen of Capitalist mechanisms of control over pre-capitalist modes of production resulted into the disempowerment of ownership of the local community over land and converted this into a source of control over their labouring or productive potential. The capitalist methods were supported by colonial diktats of high taxation and low compensation. One can link this disempowerment of the community through introduction of a concept of ownership with which Alavi (1975) had examined the colonial mode of production in the Indian context that revolved around the question of whether in the last 15 to 20 years there has been a decisive movement in agriculture from a feudal mode of production to a capitalistic mode of production. Alavi points out that the scholars have looked at European (including Russian) historical parallels and theoretical propositions that have been advanced in those contexts but nowhere a reference has been made to the Chinese experience for theoretical contributions.

Alavi suggests that the debate on mode of production should consider the agrarian economy in the wider context of developments in agriculture and the implications arising from these. He argues that concept of feudalism in India neither during the period of direct colonial domination nor during period of 'rural capitalism' can be grasped theoretically except in the context of worldwide structure of imperialism into which it is articulated. He suggests an imperialist mode of production that embraces a global unity as solution to the debate on the mode of production. However, the author notes that this consideration can lead one to a highly problematic area and one may encounter highly theoretical difficulties that cannot be easily solved. Alavi raises a plethora of questions like: would such a unity be premised on a conception of hegemonies or should one assume a hierarchical unity of an imperialist country? Does one recognize disunity and existence of imperialist rivalries? Whatever be the fact he argues that one cannot settle with an already existing definition. At this point one gets a further echo of Sanjib Baruah's paradox. On a global scale, the process of surplus extraction does not allow agrarian production to be autonomous; rather it only contributes to global division of labour and a global mode of surplus extraction. So what does it mean to have a nationalized control over means of production?

Alavi points at the problematic of conceptualization of modes of production because of the *insertion* mode of production into different social formations. Such an insertion is a supportive mechanism of global

extraction as it happens in the case of owning the means of production. In this situation, one cannot help but conceptualize the mode of production as part of the whole. The contradictions arising out of conceptualizing these formations as modes of production in the conventional meaning lead one to think about an alternative terminology. On the questions of class alignment he identifies new a class alignment. In this there is new structural dependence between the big Indian bourgeoisie and the imperialist bourgeoisie in the context of changing industrial development. In the post colonial era there is a new basis of subordination of big industrial capital by the metropolitan capital. Within this hierarchical relationship there is convergence of interests between the big Indian bourgeoisie and the imperialist bourgeoisie. This basis is radically different from the subordination of 'comprador' to the imperialist bourgeoisie on the colonial situation when some contradictions between the rising Indian bourgeoisie and the imperialist bourgeoisie came into surface. Alavi feels that it is this, which is central to a consideration of the post-colonial mode of production, and it acts as the basis of the post-colonial State. One could add here that the conflict between the regional and national bourgeoisie over their hold not just over means of production but also more importantly over market does not find a solution in the global circulation of capital. So it enters into the local and regional competition between them to ensure the maximum share of the capital. Are we then to say that the resultant conflict over share of capital in the local and regional is the prime site of development?

Space as a Crucial Marker of Development

As mode of production debate gives us how processes of surplus generation results into a loss of productive capacity and a sharp conflict over who owns how much of capital, it regresses Development to these conflicts. Banerjee-Guha (1992) advocates a new approach to understand process of "development and underdevelopment" in a more holistic way. In fact radical geographers like David Harvey for a very long time has been vigorously nurturing this "new" perspective, which treats the process of accumulation as a profoundly geographical affair. Following the same line of thought, Banerjee-Guha tries to analyze the accumulation in terms of Political Economy of space in general. With the perspective developed from this, she examines the uneven development of colonial India and its spatial continuity, which reflects the present spatial patterns of development in India. What is novel

about such an approach is that Space exhibits certain facets of accumulation of surplus in terms of location and its characteristics, which were hitherto not treated as significant. But Space acquires renewed importance as development of productive forces changes the character of geographical and social space radically and by understanding how space had been changed, one understands the effects of development.

The new approach incorporates space into the fold of political economy. It deals the ways in which geographical reordering and restructuring takes place in which spatial strategies and geopolitical elements play key role. Uneven geographical developments present vital aspects of capitalist accumulation and the dynamics of class struggle, both in the past and present, in which means of space act as a crucial determinant of levels of development and its basis in relations of production.

On the basis of this perspective Banerjee-Guha tried to link the uneven development in India and the spatial configuration of the society during the colonial period. The accumulation process carried out by the colonizers through expropriation of surplus gave rise to metropolis cities, which never got deeply integrated into the regional economies and rather acted as 'suction points'. In the eastern region, territorial expansion took the most ruthless form and the excess revenue of this region was used to make up the deficits of the Bombay and the Madras provinces, as this was the principal region where export surpluses originated. With the introduction of plantation cultivation, peasants were separated from their means of production and further the institution of the *Zamindari* system sucked surpluses leading to acute pauperization and extreme poverty. Public investment in irrigation and railways acted as further discriminating factors with the prime motive of irrigation for increasing revenue from agriculture. However with *Ryotwari* and *Mahalwari* agricultural systems in the north, west and the south, lands were given to the people and a direct connection existed between the producer and the State.

The connection and the early subordination of the eastern zone traders and the shrinking of handicraft industry made the region subservient to a settlement system whose locus was in Calcutta. What emerges is a fixed spatial relation between various sectors of production such that agriculture and trading that had a vector of shift away from land to water became the chief medium of merchandise. In another

sense spaces were subordinated to give rise to trading and weakening of traditional practices of cultivation and then turning the whole situation subservient to a rent and profit seeking colonial state. This resulted into impoverishment of mass of cultivators and rise of colonial merchandise.

The impact of introduction of colonial relations of production had wide ranging ramifications. Regional identities were fast changing depending upon the role the region played in exchange and accumulation of surpluses, although such identities did not become just economic forces, rather they existed in close relationship with the changes in the economy and spaces like cities. Traditional Indian cities were more inland and related more to internal concerns. These were microcosms of the national, regional or imperial polity. They were made to decline, as they were also the points of resistance to imperialism and were replaced by new port cities. Rising colonial demands also gave rise to a regional specialization and economies of scale that led to the concentration of production in selection of port-cities that became the recipients of migrants and became the centers of collection and consumption.

Changing Relations of Production

What the colonial relations of production resulted in were weakening of traditional base of production and rise of a class of intermediaries who stood to benefit from colonial merchandise. This had exhibited a historical precedent to current weakening of primary sectors of India's development and consequent lopsidedness of development in the economy. Bharadwaj (1982) has made an attempt to understand the persistent slackening of Indian Economy and to explain the factors influencing the process of accumulation, which gives rise to the intricate problem of regional differentiation. Bharadwaj studies the growth pattern of 17 states of India in agriculture and industry with respect to the four periods (1) the colonial period until the world war (2) inter war periods and after, until independence (3) post independence period until the mid sixties (4) period after sixties.

On the basis of secondary data drawn from various sources the author has made insightful observations and generalizations regarding the growth pattern of the states under the study.

According to her, firstly there is an importance of agricultural surpluses in adequate quantity to sustain industrial expansion. The

region sharing some industrial vitality appears to be one where agriculture growth has also been promising. For example states like Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra have always been a high productive region in agricultural sector and they are also simultaneously the most industrialized.

Secondly, public investment appears to have played an important role historically in supporting agricultural growth and in supporting environment for productive channeling of surplus. This is true in the case eastern region of India including the north-eastern part. During the colonial period surpluses extracted from this region by investing in export-based industries such as plantation and oil were used to meet the demand of other provinces. The forced commercialization policies to convert fertile hinterland into provider of cash crops and plantation crops to feed the exports based industries had led to the complete *de-industrialization* in this region. This was coupled with the differential policy of public investment. Public investment in this early colonial period was directed mainly into the railways and irrigation. Bharadwaj's analysis further shows that colonial state not only displaced the traditional modes of production but their method of extraction resulted into stunting any industrial growth.

Thirdly, the regions, which are better off, have utilized the surpluses more productively for forging a link between agriculture and industry. One gets an indication of this when one takes into consideration the per capita level of consumption of the smaller proportion of household that comprises of the lowest bracket of household consumption. In these areas not only the general level of well-being has been relatively higher (for e.g. Gujarat and Haryana) but also a higher industrial activity is observed. It can be interpreted as an association between better agriculture performance and higher level of well-being on one hand and higher industrial performance on the other. But if the region suffers from acute problem poverty it offers breeding grounds of exploitation through usuary, speculative trading, commercial exploitation etc. All these divert surplus from the unproductive channels and create relative advantage of favours to above stated operations the preponderance of such 'unproductive uses' of surplus implies a perverse system of 'social subsidization' that still continues the process of pauperization as the surplus is diverted into unproductive channels.

Formation of Spaces within Nation and the Logic of Capitalist Exchange

Knight (1982) discusses one of the major challenges of the geographers i.e. the present pressure on the fragile world by group territorial identities. Group politico-territorial identities according Knight are not only products of how spaces are organized by the overarching logic of Economic production and exchange, but a riveting of Political interests and territorial affiliations constitutes them. Such a riveting is one of the outcomes of the social processes of which economy plays an important role. But the non-economic component of territorialization assumes importance in Knight's analysis. Giving primacy to the territory, one could put the economic relations differently as a contingently emerged form of exchange relationship that goes along with changes in the conceptualization of the region. With such an open-ended point of view, Knight's *understanding of politico-territorial identity is primarily based on the question of scale and perception*. If territory is regarded as space to which distinct group who holds or covets it attaches identity to that territory and desires to have full control of it for the benefit of the groups. Such a desire for the benefit results into a claim of distinctness. According to Knight there is still a fundamental question that must be answered. Should all groups with distinct territorial and political characteristics have the right to separate territorial and political independence? If the answer is yes, then question arises at what scale? If the answer is no, then should one be content with the status quo or demand through international organization to vouch for the maintenance of the status quo. But desires of the sub national groups for a separate territory have been the dominant trend and have shown no change in the recent past. According to Knight the answer to this dilemma lies in the question as how one defines the "Nation" as a space. At one level of abstraction the Nation is only a conglomerate of regions in the form of extended spatial relations of production that pertains to a definite mode of production and its consequential accumulation.

Dikshit, (1971) makes an attempt to understand the how the nation space is structured within Federalism through the lens of a geographer. He critically analysis the notion of Federalism of earlier geographer as well as social scientists from other disciplines in his quest for a new methodology to understand the geographical underpinning of the concept of Federalism. The author especially critiques Levingstonian



notion of Federalism, which is the earliest attempt by a geographer. The author points out that Levingston's analysis is based on a sociological perspective rather than a geographical perspective. He argues that this kind of analysis has failed to yield valuable results in political science as the basic nature of federalism as a polity is based on regionally grouped diversities in a national society. It provides a tool for research, which is not sociological, as it is erroneously thought to be. But Federalism has spatial dimension and as geography deals with spatial interaction, this tool can be used to understand the federal organization of the space of nation-state that purveys a pattern of exchange relation that goes into spatial interaction. Federalism as a political principle organizes and administers space in a manner that there is equilibrium between exchange relation and power relation.

Further, Banerjee-Guha's (2002) paper entitled, "Critical geographical Praxis: Globalization and Socio-Spatial Disorder" concretely characterizes the spatial relations as an order emergent from the extension of the operation of modes of production over space. Such an extension is not an organizational form but it is also a geo-politically determined site of expansion of capital. As Capital flows through spaces like urban-metropolis, it segregates and combines spaces through a logic of reproduction of the relation between market and capital and it gradually usurps the space of labour in the sites of production. Under globalization, such spaces are replicated in order to expand the Capital through a favourable business climate. Such replication and reproduction of spaces acquire a form of cultural landscape as it makes use of local resources and specificity, but creates inherently contradictory relationship between ensuing socio-economic forms, local resources and cultural bases.

It is interesting to trace out how cultural landscapes are reproduced by a certain dominant mode of production that retains and perpetuates existing contradictions between cultural markers and makes use of the contradiction in strengthening the processes of accumulation by a concentration of the means of production among a few classes and individuals. One can surmise that space is produced to serve the material and cultural interests of dominant social groups and such spaces invaginate the non-dominant forms of life in a dialectical relationship such that such forms cannot assert their freedom. The whole politics of the dominant identity and class formation then could be easily managed through a particular spatial formation and the ensemble of

relations that it generates. Methodologically such an ordering of the space could be juxtaposed with cultural formations and contestations and such formations in turn would imply a certain form of spatial organization.

Nag, (1993) examines the national formation process of India inflected by a spatial relationship between mainland of India as centre and NEI as periphery, both in cultural and economic senses. The growth of vernacular literature; agitation to establish particular language as official languages of particular areas; movements of backward nationalities to break away from the advanced nationality in order to earn recognition for themselves were all an internalization of the new post-colonial rights given to every other national identity throughout the country. But such a claim and demand for recognition reinforced the centre-periphery relations when identities of NEI asserted their independence from the mainstream by referring to British days, while in its internal structuring, movement of a particular nationality group evolved an ideology of difference from the parent nationality. The spatial ordering of these movements harped on different living spaces to be demarcated by common national space in terms of distinct cultural markers, while the national market and the national hegemony intended to homogenize and mix them up with each other in order to integrate them with the national mainstream. But internal differentiation, being a cultural and historical fact of life resisted such a process of homogenization, rather the more it was tried, the acute was the resistance resulting into a sub-national consciousness that counterposed the unificatory idea of a common national identity. Taking cues from the Nation's historiography, Nag has explained the multifarious ways of growth of sub-nationalism in India. He argues that in a country where capitalism is slowly reaching new areas and awakening new cultural groups to life, the streams of sub-nationalist uprisings appears to be unending. The author also argues that the Indian nationality question cannot be studied in exclusion of these aspects because the culmination of this process can alone prove whether India has been a nation-in-the-making or a nation-in-the-unmaking. NEI becomes such a site of making and unmaking of the Nation with waves of subnationalist and ethnic movements.

What emerges from the foregoing discussion is the prevalence of a kind of centre-periphery relationship with the growth of capitalism that orders the social and cultural space in the interest of the Capital. As Capital plays a unificatory role of particular cultural spaces into a

homogeneity, it gives rise to its opposite, i.e., forces that perpetuate and sustain difference as reflected in the growing subnationalist movements of NEI. As the process of peripheralization goes unabated so is the process of ordering and reordering of ethnocultural spaces of NEI reflected in the multiplication of nationalities and ethnicities and the expansion of peripheries through each of these claims of distinctness, which simultaneously allows the regime of the Capital by fragmenting the local spaces and gives rise to resistance to capital from multiple sites of national struggle.

On the Development Process in North-East India

Misra (1980), argues that there has been a systematic exploitation of the rich resources of Assam before 1947 by the colonial rulers and since then by the Indian state. She deals extensively the features of this exploitation in the extractive industries of tea, oil and forest. She notes that one positive outcome of the popular movement in the 80s was the emergence of growing awareness of colonial pattern of the exploitation of the Assam's natural resources among the masses. Misra strongly feels that an understanding of colonial pattern of exploitation of Assam's resources can help one to comprehend the more fundamental causes behind the wide by sustained participation of both rural and urban masses in the current movement in the state. In the rural areas the foreign national issue primarily centres around the ownership of the land while the urban centres people saw the problem as one of industrial underdevelopment, a fall out of the colonial pattern, resulting in poverty and large scale unemployment.

She goes in depth of the evolution, functioning and contribution of the extractive industries like tea, oil, and plywood. She comes up with a common pattern of functioning of these industries. According to her, most of these industries extract raw materials from Assam for production and have their marketing units outside the state for which the state is deprived of its revenue earnings. The state has almost a negligible representation in terms of employment in these industries. The Central governments' dualistic policies have marginalized the states of NEI to establish a vibrant economy on the basis of its own rich natural resources.

So, development in the context of NEI, according to Misra would mean a process of larger extraction of resources and its institutionalized ways of draining the economy. What would flow in exchange of such

vital resources are residual funds and infrastructure that would be quickly reabsorbed by the same mechanism of drain. She named this vicious cycle as internal colonization of North East India and gave a geographical explanation for continuation for such a process. She demonstrated that as NEI supplies raw and mineral resources. So it acts a hinterland to the economy of the mainland and hence signifies a spatial ordering in which it occupies a place of subordination. In response to such subordination there are popular movements in 80s that attempted to resist this kind internal colonization of NEI.

In another way, how laws of capitalist economy destroys traditional economic bases is studied by Mishra, S.N. (1983). The study traced the dissolution of the tribal economy and the subsequent rise of a new base for the formation of the modern economy. The earlier traditional base of the tribal economy thrived on arrangements like 'Posha' whereby the tribes living in the mountainous track of Arunachal Pradesh had not only the right of levying taxes on the plain's people but also access to material goods as well as services of slaves. The hill tribes in turn guarded the rough terrains from attacks of outsiders. But this traditional economic base started eroding right from the British annexation of Assam. The earlier system of 'Posha' was being monetized and fixed. As a result of this the tribal people lost the right to levy and collect taxes. The outcome of this was that market relations introduced by the colonial state replaced the long lasting dealings between the tribal and plain people. The author notes that the age -old systems survived well after the independence of the country until the Chinese invasion of the region turned the region into a sensitive zone. In fact, the transformation of tribal economy to a new economy after this period through the agency of state has been so dramatic that the author tries to call it a "social revolution" in a Marxian language.

The aforesaid transformation is explained by the author by taking into consideration "the Nishings", one of the hill tribes occupying the lower part of the upper Subanshiri region of Arunachal Pradesh. The first component of the traditional economic basis of the *Nishing* community comprised of such forces of production as land, forest both tropical as well as temperate, hunting and fishing grounds, human population as means of labour and technical knowledge in tools made from metals were used for various purposes. The second component of the economic basis comprised of the relations of production including those of distribution, circulation and exchange of products. In the

traditional economy of the *Nishings*, the surplus produce is bartered for necessities like clothing, metal goods, pots and salt and finally for an animal called *mithun*. Families in deficit borrow from those who have surplus and return the borrowed amount in the next harvest or even later. There was no concept of interest or capital.

According to Mishra, the production process which consists of sequential or simultaneous sub-processes like those of slashing the vegetation cover, burning the debris, sowing seed, fencing, harvesting etc. itself rest or subsume two sets of relations (1) the relations among the workers deployed for carrying out the production processes including the norms of labour cooperation, and (2) the relations of workers with means of production, namely land and instruments of labour. Both these sets of relations among *Nishings* were based on customary institutions enjoying community sanctions.

After 1960 all the tribes of the Arunachal Pradesh came under the scope of the state sponsored development. The state through various schemes and subsidies vigorously campaigned for the permanent settlement and subsequently the *jhum* fields were converted into orchards or developed for permanent irrigated cultivation. The story sounds similar to the processes of settled cultivation that disempowered other traditional communities of NEI from choosing a suitable range of optimum productive methods and means. So, formation of state property has been partly at the cost of the common property. As a result the old relations of production have been in the process of breaking down. Along with the private relations, market and money have taken root. In the new economic environment money acquired a store value and became a means of private accumulation. Unlike the traditional system, labour is being commercialized in the new economic set up. Finally, with private property formation in land and other assets, with increasing role of money in production relations and accumulation of money capital, there has been increase in differentiation in income and consumption of the families belonging to a tribe.

In the case of Arunachal Pradesh this transformations from dissolution of the traditional base of the economy to formations of the modern base of the economy the only external force is the State. However this has not been the case of some other states of northeast where beside the state other external factors e.g. immigration from neighboring regions have also influenced this transformation.

In similar vein D.K. Misra's (2001) paper documents all the changes and analyses some aspects of these process of change, focusing on interplay of three distinct forces: the market, the state and the community in the case of Arunachal Pradesh. In the post independence period, the people of the state have experienced enormous changes at different levels. In the structural transformation of the Arunachal's economy the decline is manifested in the expansion of productive capacity of the economy, the decline in the relative importance of primary sector, occupational diversification of the work force, increasing marketization and monetization of the exchange process and changes in property rights.

Mishra begins his paper with the influence of the of the twin agents of the market and state on the transformations of tribal social formations and presents the case of agriculture and forest related activities and he finally concludes the paper with implications of these changes and the role played by the forces of the state, market and community.

The author notes that the two process of change - the internal forces, which arises itself from the indigenous tribal social formations and external forces mainly the state and the market. It is the interplay of these two forces, which has led to the transformations in the political economy of the agrarian structure. In the case of Arunachal Pradesh, the State underwent epochal changes during the colonial era. During this period, the traditional tribal economy got dissolved. The twin agents of market and state in the modern time have transformed tremendously the tribal social formations, especially the agriculture. In fact state has predominance over market as the principal modernizing agent, which has created a process of transition in Arunachal Pradesh that has its own specificities.

The major change that the author notes with regard to the state's agrarian scene is the change in the cropping pattern, contribution of agriculture to the economy etc. The state has witnessed high proportion of commercial cultivation and agricultural labourers, a change in the cropping pattern with a high percentage of increase in non food grains at the cost of the food grains, a shift towards private and individual ownership of holding and a shift of manpower to the non-farm sector.

With mutually reinforcing role of population growth, the market and the state, the nature of ownership of rights over land and forests has changed. The encouragement for switching over from shifting cultivation to permanent cultivation, land improvement grants, incentives for

plantation of cash crops and even training to individual farmers to acquire skills led to formation of private property rights. Increasing penetration of capitalism has transformed the notion of property rights also.

On one hand the emergence of new elite, the shift of manpower from rural to urban occupations, linking of villages from interior areas to areas with better communications have undermined the effective authority of traditional institutions. On the other hand, electoral democracy and development projects have opened up new areas to exercise control over it. The immigration of large number of outsiders to the state, particularly to the areas as agricultural laborers and tenants has also forced the local communities to rethink their rules for providing access to resources.

But how this transformation affects the construction of agency of the tribal identity has been highlighted by Roy Burman (1989) and on the basis of this conceptualization of agency of the tribal, he discussed what are the constraints to their development, both internal and external.

According to the author the tribe as a social formation may be identified in two ways – first as a stage in the history of evolution of societies and second, as a society organized on the basis of kinship ties which enables it to be a multifunctional grouping. On this basis, he argues that a tribe can outgrow its primitiveness and retain the social boundary, which is an essential feature of its identity.

The author distinguishes proto-nationalism and infra nationalism from sub-nationalism. According to him in the first two phases of the identity expansion of ethnic groups, the group remained isolated from the dominant political mobilization leading to state formation. This isolation continued as long as the tribal base of the economy could withstand the onslaught of modern capitalist economy. This withstanding was possible by the cultural synergy between tribal mores and system of production. Contrastingly, Sub-nationalism is a phase of contraction of ethnic identities which got closely involved in the dominant process of the state but among which parochial loyalties are coming forth as an outcome of iniquitous functioning of the state apparatus.

With this conceptual framework, when the tribal situation in the North-East India (NEI) is examined with respect to the constraints in the development of proto-national process, it could be found that the tribal entities get oriented to the statist processes of India, which comes out in sharp focus. The first is the historical memory of the tribes and

the hiatus in the perception of the meaning of historical events among the tribals and the non-tribals. Second is the effective cognitive difference about the cultural rights and the structures and strategies of resource mobilizations.

The author argues that looking at the strategic location of NEI, policy planners should have the sensitivity and awareness in the happenings of neighboring countries of the sub continents of Asia. It is further argued that in the NEI tribal communities tend to constitute marginalized status class. National unity in NEI can be cemented only by encompassing the significance of India as the vanguard nation against colonialism and as one committed to non-capitalist path of development. However, a consistent and continuous manifestation of these ideological dimensions must be there in addition to emotional and material dimension.

The author critiques the development strategy put forward by the center. He argues that in terms of political economy "anti development" is taking place through development policies. The land reform policies that envisages abolition of exploitative intermediaries between the state and the individual has serious constraints in tribal economies of NEI, as tribal communities derive only a part of the food products such as roots, tubers, and leaves and other jungle products that are collected by the communities. Hence, the implementation of such policies is considered to actually dispose the tribal households from community-based resources. Policies such as the recommendation of the National Committee on Development of Backward areas for the individualization of communal ownership of land will in fact lead to neo-federal rights.

In similar light Acharya (1998) made an attempt to study the some of the ethnic process in the NEI. The author draws the theoretical framework heavily from the analytical models in Soviet ethnography, particularly the works of Yulian Broomley. However to explain the ethnic complexities in India with its unique caste system and strong popular feelings about Indian "nation" he introduces certain other concepts and terms. His paper begins with an introduction of ethnos and ethnics, which are highly misused in the literature of social anthropology. The second half of the paper mainly discusses the ethnic processes such as –ethnic divergence, ethnogenic interethnic consolidation, ethnogenic mixing, inter ethnic consolidation and finally the process of assimilation. While dealing with these processes the author reviews the earlier works and discusses them in an elaborative

manner with respect to the present situation. The paper examines the complex pattern of these aforesaid ethnic processes with reference to India in general and NEI in particular.

Can such suggestions about reorientation of paths of development and reempowerment of tribals through a process of ethnogenesis in NEI alter the process of marginalization and peripheralization?

Political Structures and Development in Northeast India

Sanjib Baruah (1989) analyses the pros and cons of the minority policy advocated by the Centre and its future ramifications. He opines that the present minority policy of the Centre is in fact a continuation of the British policy that aimed at the protection of the vulnerable indigenous people. The author argues that the minority policy advocated for NEI in one hand has witnessed certain achievements it has posed serious dangers in an ethnically majority region like and the North East.

The present policy, which emphasizes the protection of the vulnerable indigenous people from their more crafty neighbours is a reluctant continuation even though it is out of favor to Indian national circles. The Britishers during the Colonial days carried exclusive protectionist policies e.g. the "Inner Line Policy" by which the area beyond the line was left to the indigenous people to manage their own affairs. Although colonial administration cited the importance of preserving ethnic communities from outsiders but the major reason behind not extending the British administration to these areas was the political risks and financial expenses involved in it.

One gets the reflection of the effect of this type of policies among the tribal leaders in states like Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Mizoram. The idea is to follow a path of self-development without the distortions from the external factors. Therefore during the popular agitation against the immigrants in Assam in the 80s there was a demand for the extension of the Inner Line to Assam in order to protect the ethnic minorities. But such insularity from the outside world not only distanced them from the mainstream, but also stopped their coming out from their own habitats. It strongly created a self-consciousness that did not allow any space to the other, while this space of self-consciousness; indeed its very assertion signified an ongoing intrusion or affectation of tribal suzerainty by external forces. In all senses this was a reaction of the tribal communities to external threats, but such

a reaction could not stop the way such forces impeded the path of self-development.

A second element of this policy according to Baruah, is the diffusion of a model of political autonomy through culturally defined states that was mainly developed with respect to peninsular India. However, there are certain benefits and dangers of such policies. The notion of legitimized demand on the basis of language has a different connotation in an ethnically diverse region like NEI, where there is no single dominance of language, which acted as a divisive factor. Unlike in the Indian mainland, where political movements demanded separate statehood on the basis common language, in Northeast India such movements based their mobilization mostly on symbols other than these languages. The demand for Hill state in various parts of northeast India attempted to mobilize the sentiments of the hill people against the plainsman. What eventually emerged, as a result of this kind of demands was not a single hill state but a number of mini states.

The author identifies the benefits of such statehood whereby the mini states have been allowed to elect the representatives of the indigenous people to gain power at the state level and to determine policy in areas that are the under the constitutional jurisdiction of states. He also feels that political, social and economic consequences of the policies carried out by the elected governments were drastic in which the indigenous people enjoy majority status. In state like Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh where the legislature is dominated by representatives of the indigenous people it has extended and strengthened policies of protective discrimination in favor of schedule tribes in govt. employment, allocation of govt. contracts, transfer of land and property to non-tribal been made extensively difficult.

He concludes with a view that the assumption that there are exclusive groups that can be given statehood or autonomy in their territories is predominantly problematic in the context of NEI. To impose such a model there is to court danger of inter-ethnic strife, despite its effectiveness so far.

Mukhopadhyay (1998) identifies the factors of under development of the state of Arunachal Pradesh and manifestations of these on the state. Arunachal Pradesh is endowed with good hydroelectric potential, rich in mineral and forest resources but due to certain drawbacks, the development of the State has been hampered. She points out that most

of the investment is exploitative in nature, mainly involved in the extraction of the rich forest wealth. There has been ruthless cutting of the medicinal plants by new drug companies on which the tribal people heavily depend for medical cure. Various government plans have been implemented and some are in the pipeline but most of them have been ineffective and the institutions set up for the implementation have turned out to be a white elephant. According to the author, basic problem is the failure to identify the factors which have alienated the people in Arunachal Pradesh from the rest of the country. Other factors like erratic power supply, intermittent floods, poor roads, lack of entrepreneurial culture and persistent militancy have slowed the development process of the region. She argues that there has been a superimposition of mainstream political structures over the region's traditional autonomous socio-political institutions and the Indian State has not focused on the development of tribal culture but imposed mainstream cultural hegemony. The emergences of new educated groups have found that their traditional ways of living are being threatened by the forces of modernization. A movement for the resurrection of indigenous identity has been started by the intellectuals of the state to mobilize the mass. She criticizes the Central government for its inability to comprehend the intricacies of such development and its lapses to address the socio-economic problem.

Sinha (1998) draws an understanding of the NEI as a territorial entity and its relationship with the Indian State with the help of the politico-cybernetic models of the State. One of the models presumes the 'state' to be a unicellular organism with nuclei (centre, core, and capital). It also considers a system in which continuous surveillance by the dominant forces on the subordinates' behaviour and deployment of threats and punishments are normal ingredients. All these are performed in terms of power, which is defined as control over communication flows, located in the state at one point where decisions are made and information is transmitted. In such a politico-cybernetic model of the state, the extensive territorial entity such as India according to Sinha is nothing but a hierarchy of power centres upwardly branching out to a seat of ultimate decision-making power. In such a model the commands follow down from the centre to the periphery and information travel in the reverse direction. In the normative model the state, power is replaced by the concept of collective consensus on shared norms and values. Here the emphasis is placed on society, considered to be a commonality of immaterial elements such as images and moral codes. Status and prestige are peacefully and unanimously accorded to those

who fill the most strategic roles in the societies. It is presumed there exists a central zone in the realm of the values, beliefs and actions in the structure of society. This central zone also provides a set of activities, roles and personnel within the network of institutions. In this way the central zone is intimately connected with society considered to be sacred and ideal as espoused by the ruling authority. From this point of view, India as a territorial entity has a number of sub-systems, such as polity, economy, status, ecclesiastical and kinship systems etc. which are organized through common and overlapping sets of values and personnel. These types of sub-subsystems characterize the pattern of authority symbolized by individual behaviour.

In this context Sinha finds a closer empirical reality of inter-relationship between the Indian mainstream (or the core) and the North-Eastern frontiers. These frontier states are tenuously linked with the Centre, where the strategic elite are located, significant decisions are made, commands are transmitted to the peripheries and the information are demanded from them. The key terms, which qualify the relationship between the two, are power, legitimacy, authority, rule and compliance. Sinha points out that such relations are formal, mechanical and legal that sprang up because of some historical accident but is sought to be given paramount importance. The pattern of this relationship smacks of colonial attitude of the past, to which the new rulers have added a paternalistic veneer of development and planning for the backward region.

Such a relationship emerges in a particular pattern in the grassroot institutions of development as well. Duggal Verma and Mathew (1999) in their studies of nature of governance in the state of Nagaland points out the two contradictions –the micro-micro and the macro-micro. In the former case the traditional Village Council (VC) has failed to check the corruption within the Village Development Council (VDB) created by the state under the VC to initiate development programs. The study finds that in the traditional matter the VC functions smoothly and in the case of VDB, the VC has failed to assert its authority and check corruption (micro-micro). The same contradiction is also observed when indigenous people are put in the higher hierarchy of decision making (the state, the districts) and a body to carry out the development programme under it the same problem persists (macro-micro). There has been large elite appropriation of the public and leakages in the development funds.

Agrarian base of the Economy and Politics of Development

Karna (1990) deals with the changes with respect to the agrarian scenario of NEI and notes that there has been an increasing shift towards commercialization of tillage practices and nature and extent of labour uses. Drawing from various micro studies of the hills of Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, Manipur he points that the jhumias of NEI region are now cultivating cash crops increasingly. Under such a market system there is a monopoly of a trading and merchant classes mostly from outside the region. In case of Meghalaya and Mizoram he notes that cash crops cultivation is becoming popular where an easy produce has a quick market enabling higher returns. This transformation not only brought the tribal land to the market but also the possibility to buy tribal labour. Under the influence of linkages outside, the tribal people are renting out land to new immigrant sharecroppers from whom they never have been able to recover the land and thus losing away the vital means of production.

Another significant depletion of traditional practices of cultivation lay in depriving the tribal communities from their traditional community landholding by way of discouraging the practice of 'shifting cultivation' by the State. Such a discouragement not only alienated the tribals from the community based forest farming but also consequent degradation of the soil quality. The development policies pursued by various governments resulted into shrinking of *Jhum* cropping area and as a result created wasteland. Choudhury (1998) demonstrated that replacement of *Jhum* by settled cultivation brought in the necessity of afforestation and wasteland development. But such programmes reverse the historically naturalized relationship between forestland and agricultural land, which hitherto established a kind of harmony between agricultural productivity and forest cover. The breach in this relationship not only unsettled the traditional ways of natural resource management but it had resulted into a prima facie degradation of land, to be later rejuvenated by using permanent plantation and introduction of sedentary agricultural activities. This is not only an imposition on the traditional resource management but a depletion of the resource base itself. It demonstrates a high degree of insensitivity and pursuance of counter productive developmental programmes.

What emerges is the concrete evidence of the damage done by introduction of commercialized idea of agriculture and land use through the developmental plans that aim at changing the production relations

with its worsening effects on the region. Such adverse effects are compounded in the rise of private property in every sphere of life that results into further misery and deprivation to the tribes of NEI.

A Holistic Counterhegemonic Framework of Struggle for Development

Biswas (1997) and Biswas and Suklabaidya (forthcoming, 2003) argues that it is the nature of cultural politics in North East India that decides even the mode of production explanation of development in the holistic sense. They identify cultural politics as a Politics of responsibility that expresses the extent to which ethnic communities of the NEI region launch struggles against dominance. The experience of being dominated goes with the lived experience of marginalization in every sphere of life and hence resulted into making of counter hegemonic struggles. The impetus for such counter hegemonic struggle lies in the perception that a periphery like NEI always has the real danger of being subdued in the process of Development as the national framework of development always gives rise to alienation from traditional practices and more drastically a class of neo-elites who directly serve the interest of National Capital and who manipulate and distort the development process in favour of forces that displace the internal sources of development, be it resources or local knowledge. They consider this process of domination through development as one of plank of carrying out popular democratic politics and forces within NEI tacitly fall to a collaborator of this. Yet there are radicals and the mundane who together in their own ways subvert the almost colonial structure of development packages even at the cost of underdevelopment. In other words, modes of development alien to the cultural politics of North East need to overcome this ground level resistance from already existing social formations. Ignoring these formations for the sake of National development is an anathema.

So the all-important questions are two: how do the developmental policies of the State strengthen/weaken the resource base and production relation that already exists in NEI? Next, how does the exchange relationship give rise to the dominant form of economic relations that marginalized the non-economic forces of production? Answer to these questions involves the underpinnings of social and political constructions of identities that appear through binary oppositions between dominance and counter-dominance, the cultural and the economic etc. clearly showing a relative autonomy of

functioning of identities. Such functions produce new relationships in interrelated domains of social life. Developmental process in NEI, therefore, involves crucial variables like cultural articulations of identities and economically determined processes of production and reproduction.

The Problem

On the developmental debate (Griffin, 1968; Frank, 1969) investigations in political economy consists in isolating the specific modes and the relationship of dominance and dependency that exists at various points in the socio-historico and cultural processes. In the case of North-East India (NEI) it can be imbricated within a metropolitan-satellite relationships that subsists *in* the Indian Capital and the Indian State. Evidence for this lies at the unequal exchange of resources and products, flights of capital from NEI, increasing pressure on the fixed factors of production like land etc. All these find its reflection in the state of the economy of the NEI, which by all parameters turn out to be underdeveloped in comparison to the national scenario.

To understand the nature and causes of underdevelopment in NEI, this essay tentatively explores the linkages between the modes of development and the modes of production in order to arrive at a global explanation to the phenomena of underdevelopment. The essay considers the following vital questions-

What is the nature of accumulation and its impact on the modes of production prevalent in NEI?

In what way the Indian State operate at the local and the regional levels? Does it conform/contradict to this process of dependent accumulation?

What are the structural components of dependency relationships, especially the matrix of social relationship that sustains dependency?

How are the positive indexes of the underdevelopment, which are levels attained in the operation of a certain modes of development related to modes of production?

What are the political and cultural expressions of underdevelopment in the specific context of NEI?

Selection of these problems centre around an explanation of two interdependent yet distinguishing phenomenon of political economy

and cultural identity (ies) without reducing one to the other. Such an explanation would bring together political economy and culture close to each other and bridge some distance between them while they cannot be reduced to just components of a singular explanation. This could be understood by referring to relative autonomy of the superstructure, which would act as a guiding point to disseminate these specificities of development in NEI.

Given this irreducibility of Culture into Economics and vice-versa the question is, how does one go about explaining the fact of resistance to the dominant discourse of development that centres around dominant mode of production? The dominant discourse of development in all possible ways indicates to a top-down process than a bottom up approach to the question of empowerment of NEI in seeking solutions that are derived from the self-defined positionality of a periphery. How does one understand the self-defined cultural, political and economic positionalities of a number of ethnic and student organizations of NEI? Is it that Economic demands, as understood by a section of scholars on North- East India given the least priority on the agenda of social movements from NEI? Is it true that such movements are merely ethnocentric without sharing anything in common with the mainstream? Or, what are the ways in which a substantive give and take is possible between North- East and India?

The stereotype of NEI being isolated from national mainstream produce a significant cognitive distortion in understanding the possibilities of conflict resolution at least at the level of sharing certain common goals of development. The incommensurability of goals notwithstanding what middle grounds could be explored in ensuring a lasting peace in the conflict-ridden region of NEI is a question mark still.

Approach to the Problem

The study takes into account the limitations of fragmented, isolated and piecemeal nature of empirical enquiries into the development of North-East India (NEI), which are limited to explaining 'what happens when' kinds of situations. A large number of scholars of NEI, therefore presents the dilemma over combining the empirical and normative. But the prevailing social and political scenario of NEI presents a complex picture of political mobilization that bases itself on the indexes of social and economic development. The situation throws up the challenge to investigate into the causal and historical linkages between politics and

economics, which in turn compel most of the scholars to evolve a quasi-political explanation of social and economic development. Given this situational compulsions one has to find out broad enough categories of development in order to accomplish the task of understanding and situating development in an integrative perspectives of politics and economics.

Keeping this in mind the primary question to approach the problem of this essay is how to relate modes of development with the modes of production. As there are no clear distinguishable characteristics of modes of development with respect to the modes of production, one needs to develop a staged connection between the two.

The central premise for understanding development is that actors and agencies are structurally determined to engage within the given modes of production which came into being due to a number of historical, social and cultural factors. In the case of North-East India such factors of historical importance are often political and cultural that act as 'response factors'. In other words, they assume an apriori role over economic development. To put it in more firmly, no development in North-East India is bereft of a distinct political and cultural mobilization and it is in this sense that development assumes a political economy phenomenon with its cultural implications.

To begin with one could look into the internal and external relationships between labour processes and commodification within particular mode of production. How modes of development are related to modes of production could be understood in terms of identifying actual and possible shifts in crucial indicators of development that reflects the relationship between the labour process and commodification.

An economy, largely dominated by the primary sector, the dominant labour processes in agricultural production is 'domestic', as it primarily serves the consumption needs of the family and the community with a negligible surplus for market. The relationship between dominant labour processes and commodification is weak within domestic modes of production, as it does not allow enough marketable surplus. This point could be properly corroborated by taking into account data from ethnographic and anthropological studies of '*jhum*' cultivation and communal sharing of cultivable land. It could be further elicited by taking into account the nature of monetary transactions, investments

and consumption pattern in sample villages from representative states of the region.

Along with the domestic modes of production there is coexistence of forms of capitalistic modes of production like a hybrid mix of externally dependent monopolists, individual intermediaries in the manufacturing sectors and the service sector composed of totally dependent service class, contractors, dealers, merchants and others. Three basic activities seem to be determined in this modes of production, namely production, mediation of exchanges and consumption with respect to which sub-modes could be delineated: formation of regional Capital, intermediaries and dependents. These modes of production taken as a whole do not assume uniformity across various side sectors of production, rather one can identify a difference between a manufacturer and a dealer and a consumer, all tied by a common thread of larger dependence of this mode on the national and international market. Even among the manufacturers some are monopolist especially in oil and tea industries while others are a subsidiary of giant manufacturing industries outside the region. Among the dealers some enjoy the privilege of strong linkage with national market for which most are merchants from out-side the region. The consumer class is again sharply divided in terms of their accessibility to market while they are dependent on the spin-offs from the market. An increasingly capitalistic mode of production produces more and more dependency among classes of producer, dealer and consumer.

An analysis of this variation within capitalistic modes of production would be carried out in terms of other relations with the external market. Internally these strata of producer, dealer and consumer present another picture of dependence as they are polarized in relation to each others access to the market.

The question is, given two broad modes of production, one peripheral modes of production and another dependent capitalistic modes of production, *what are the possible modes of development?* One can understand the possible modes of development in terms of the nature of accumulation. As domestic and dependent capitalistic mode of production together gives rise to expropriation of surplus without an equivalent appropriation, the situation leads to a stagnation and underdevelopment with the feature of an internal colony and an absence of appropriate technology and strategies of Development (Butola 1996, Misra 2000, Miri 1996,2003). The possibilities of development are

constrained by the structural domination of national Capital over the regional capital, lack of extended reproduction of labour processes and distributive asymmetries between components of various modes of production. All these together compound the ambiguity of maintaining a culture specific lifestyle and slips into the dominant discourse of adopting what the State or any other agency of the Pan-Indian ruling class decides to bring forth in the name of development showing a very limited role of choices that emanate from communities of NEI.

Table No. 1
Interrelationship between Modes of Development and Modes of Production

Modes of Production	Domestic	Intermediary	Capitalist
Modes of Development	Self-reliant	Development of Local Markets	Dependent
Accumulation	Primitive Accumulation	Marketable Surplus	Expropriation without Appropriation
Institutions	Local and Communitarian	Trading & Business Agencies, Local Corporate Bodies	Industrial sector Financial Institutions Service and Welfare Sector
Classes	Rural Petty Bourgeoisie	Regional Petty Bourgeoisie	Middle Class & Regional Bourgeoisie

Identification of such factors would lead us to understand the roles of various actors and agencies in the process of development. As modes of production equals the combinations of social relations of production and the levels of development of productive forces, the approach presents the possibility of distinguishing the agency from the structure. Therefore the task is to identify agency both in the State as well as in the productive classes in order to bring out the social relations of production in terms of which development could be characterized. Following this, a tentative model of interrelationships between modes of development and modes of production in the context of North-East India could be present like above.

In the table above, interrelationship between modes of production and modes of development, the nature of accumulation, institutional

networks and classes are taken as the manifest of outcome of modes of production modes of development. If modes of development are derived from modes of production a structural relationship could be established between economy and processes of development which involves an ensemble of institutional, political and economic relations. The ensemble could be understood only if there is a structural relationship between modes of development and modes of production. The structural relationship between modes of production and modes of development could be understood from the premise that development is development of productive forces qua modes of production. Further, one can conceive development as a process of internal growth with specific reference to a society or a culture only if ensemble of social relations is structurally reproduced. This structural reproduction of the ensemble of social relations is a part of the relations of reproduction that emanates from particular modes of production. In other words, the autonomy of development has relations of reproduction that could be understood from how modes of production determine a particular form of reproduction which, becomes a part of universal and generalized reproduction of an ensemble of production relations. Development assumes autonomy within the structural relations of production by way of changing and modifying the relations of reproduction. Strategies of development aim at altering and restructuring these relations of reproduction, which are the outcome of the ensemble of production relations. Given such a structural relationship between modes of production and modes of development one can conceptualize the relationship in the context of NEI.

As the table shows domestic and peripheral modes of production gives rise to a self-reliant mode of development in the sense that this particular mode of production aims at self-fulfilling consumption at the individual and community level typically available in the peripheral locations of NEI. These peripheral locations assume the form of 'self-enclosed little economies' in which production and reproduction follow a harmonious pattern. Similarly, in the Intermediary modes of production there is production of surplus through mercantile activities that is continued and sustained through relations of unequal exchange. But such relations of unequal exchange cannot take the form of extended reproduction of marketable surplus as it cannot enhance the productive capacity. There is only a horizontal extension of the market limited by the extent to which exchange relations establishes a balance between trading and surplus. In other words, market relations do not assume an

autonomy over and above what is produced by a given modes of production. In this intermediary modes of production, development assume an in-egalitarian form of give and take where the redistribution is constrained by the calculus of gains and losses. In the context of NEI to the most happening layer of the society lies at this intermediary modes of production as it represents the exchange potential of communities. Further, to this the capitalist modes of production centred on maximization of profit assume an outward orientation whereby the products from industries are sold in the market lying outside the region. This mode of production manifests the dualism of internal and external markets at movements of goods and services. As the sector depends heavily on profits from such unequal exchange giving in to the external market it results in accumulation of surplus conditioned by demands outside. Such dependency relations bring in subordination of the local capitalist by the larger core of Indian economy, which restricts their developmental potentialities.

As part of the structural relations between modes of production and modes of development, the nature of accumulation presents how capital is circulated within a mode of production. The classical notion of primitive accumulation in the form of owning and expanding private property gets metamorphosed into development of sustainable homestead economy thriving upon an emphasis on stock of produce meant for future consumption. Such stockpiling of produce is balanced by an assessment of the collective vis-à-vis individual, household necessity. Such an accumulation does not flow into circulation of commodities, rather it grows limit upon the possibilities of uncontrolled accumulation. In the case of NEI such accumulation could be conceived as non-capitalist modes of production, which does not only resist commodification but also arrests unequal exchange. Although such a mode of production does not enhance productive forces, it retains a horizontal equality of exchanges outside commodification. By remaining outside the sphere of commodification, domestic mode of production becomes the basis for community based resource management.

As the Capitalist processes of uneven development simultaneously includes and excludes the primary modes of production, primitive accumulation in domestic and peripheral modes of production exists as a source of alterity and difference. Such a difference assumes an autonomous space which is strikingly present in the hill economies of NEI. The uneven linkages that such a sector develops with the

intermediary and the capitalist modes of production results into coexistence of mutually exclusive modes of production. This presents inherently contradictory layers of modes of production and positions the weaker amongst the stronger, thereby giving rise to the rule of the capitalist relations of production over primary modes or production. Development strategies aim at producing a minimum balance or a reflective equilibrium between these mutually exclusive modes of production, each of which give rise to a corresponding mode of development. The primary question before the development theories would be, does the coexistence of the contradictory modes of production make development limited by the structure? One way to answer the question is to maintain that development being the central metaphor of capitalist modes of production yields to heterogeneous social forms that constitute a coexistence of contradictory modes of production. Therefore, what comes after development of capitalist modes of production is this coexistence of primary, intermediary and capitalist modes of production within which the substitution of the weaker by the dominant results into a displacement of heterogeneity. In another way, to answer the question could be to search out the conditions of the coexistence of contradictory modes of production sustained by a hierarchy of structural relations that include the ensemble of social relations and patterns of accumulation. In both the ways, neither the substituting of the weaker by the dominant nor the perpetuation of the hierarchy of contradictory modes of production clear out the space for development. Rather it creates gaps and fissure within development relegating a certain strata to the weaker mode of production while erecting another strata of the dominant. Therefore, the weaker and the dominant mutually constitute each other as something simultaneously contradictory and yet coexisting, continuously generating a force of displacement and heterogeneity through a hierarchical ordering. Within this hierarchy the weaker modes of production constitute the dominant via its annihilation through development, while the stronger constitutes the weaker via underdevelopment. While development tries to appropriate underdevelopment in the forms of capitalist modes of production appropriating the labour processes of other weaker modes of production, it appropriates a part of the weaker through development, while it leaves aside another part as underdevelopment lying at the margins of capitalist economy. This process of development of underdevelopment goes along with transformation of capitalist accumulation from local to the global. This is a kind of upward displacement from the local into the global

which implies a displacement of periphery into centre. The development process in the context of NEI bears these contours of development of underdevelopment in the relationship between coexisting modes of production that acts in a contradictory manner to displace and replace indigenous modes of production (mostly domestic and peripheral) into capitalist modes of production.

Methodology

The problematique of understanding the complex relationship between the modes of production and modes of development and its cultural implications calls for a critique of development and various alternatives that follow from such a critique. The critiques need to move from commonsense to critical sense, as it has to address not only the systemic factors of development but also the local and micro level responses to what come from above. The standard political economy method that makes use of modes of production argument give an inkling into structural relations of production and reproduction both at the material and cultural levels. So, the essay has to draw an equation between political economy and culture but such an equation is not possible without taking into account the concrete situation of NEI. The concrete situation involves the emergence of ethnic movements and spacing of such movements, exhibiting the production of political identities in space and time. But space and time are not givens rather they are socially and culturally constructed as an affect of economic reationality and political imagination. The claim of being a tribal or a member of an ethnic community gives rise to complex process of spacing the self in the horizon of history. Further, history assumes the form of relations of material production and what follows from such relations. In the practice of spacing the self-identity the NEI communities appropriate a certain relation between time and production and inscribes an identity on such abstract markers of engagements with nature and culture. Within this engagement there is an underdetermination of political and cultural identities by the lived experience of tribes and communities that primarily centers around their rule in socially productive domains of Economy. The all-important questions become how does one space oneself in the Space produced by concrete political economy? Is there a political economy of production of space that determines the claims of engagement?

One has to establish a relationship between political economy, culture and space as triple registers of development and construction

of social identities in the context of NEI. Space provides the necessary context to apply development as a category, which has its central implication in the production of cultural identity. But space cannot be understood without taking into account the political economy of production of space itself, which moves from organization and production in space to production of space that mediates relations of production.

To understand how these mediations take place one has to look into the space of representation in which modes of production signify a certain mode of development. So, the question is how the space of representation is constituted? To answer this how question one has to look into the 'what' question as the constitutions of space shows a certain mode of being i.e. conditions of existence. These conditions of existence are manifested in the inalienable relations between being and having, having and becoming, which are both related to the space of production in which the economy functions to fulfill the conditions of existence that are ontological to the mode of being. Modes of being as constituent of the space are synthesis between production and conditions of existence. Therefore, to understand the space of representation one needs to interpret how economy functions through various modes of production that give rise to the relationship between production and the space of self-identity. Such an interpretation has to take into account the production of surplus and the linkage with historical development of modes of production that go into definition of the space for one's self-identity. So, one has to follow a hermeneutic method that combines both political economy and cultural identity through the space of representation,

But the space of representation is an abstract, heterogeneous, contradictory and emergent space. Such an uneven nature of space is simultaneously transcendental and experiential. It is transcendental in the sense that it is the condition of the possibility of situating one's knowledge of oneself, while it is experiential in the form of the inalienable grounding of the subjective, objective and inter-subjective dimensions of one's ties with a particular history and a particular culture. There is often a possibility of cognitive plurality based upon the positioning of the human subject. The way one projects a self-conscious understanding of one's relationship with the world gives one the fundamental basis for reproducing one's self in the concrete social relations of production, while such relations manifest themselves in an external objective space of existence produced by activity of production. But the space produced

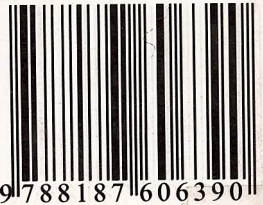
by the activity of production remains external to the space of consciousness. Phenomenologically speaking such an external relations between the produced space and the space of consciousness, operates in any space of representation and determines the form of cultural, ethnic or political identity. Further exploring this space of representation as a byproduct of the relation between the socially produced space and the space of consciousness, one would perceive dialectic between the two. In a situation of multiple modes of production within the social formations of NEI it is the dialectic between the capitalist relations of production and its others is what determines the space of representation. The space of representation envelops the contradiction between the modes of production as well as limiting the conditions that arise from this contradiction. The limit imposed by the contradiction between the modes of production in turn limits the space of representation. Such a limitation of the space of representation acts as a constraint in our understanding of space of representation, which could be overcome if one can identify a set of critical praxis that explains how the space mediates various essential factions of the economy.

The meditative role of the space is simultaneously spatial and conceptual. The spatial aspects could be retrieved by following the geography of knowledge in relation to production of identity and their embeddedness in relations of production. The primary question of this mode of enquiry is a methodological one: can we have a spatial reference to distinct modes of production that embed inalienable social and political identity? One would suggest a critical geographical practice of disclosing the nature of space as the determinant of the claims of identity. This is possible by way of locating the sites of economic production in relation to non-economic conditions of production. Such a relationship takes a leaf from the naturalized pre-given mode of production to a critique of production that opens up how the activity of capital and surplus generate a particular kind of development, i.e. a leap from political economy to the sphere of development that involves a number of non-economic factors. Such non-economic factors manifest themselves in space as a form of unaccounted surplus, which is beyond a surplus generating economy, an extension of production relation beyond the site of production and market. Such an extension overhauls the space of production into the nature of reproduction that flows into in-between spaces between production and surplus. These in-between-spaces operate beyond capital as it originates from the relations of reproduction and moves into the development of non-capitalist-non-

economic zones of social relations. This extended form of production of social identities that incorporates naturalized space of production and moves beyond it combines the transient and the experiential aspects of Space and overcomes the limit of structural relations of production. This shows up the newer possibility of a critical geography of identity in emergent spaces that gives a new meaning of development and shifts the paradigms from the production of space to spacing of identities in hitherto unfamiliar spaces.

Finally, to avoid the dichotomy between the a top-down and a bottom-up approach one has to leave open a formulation of modes of development to an interface between contemporary politics and social movements which would keep the conclusion open ended.

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