

Chapter III

CAPITALIST STATE, POLITICS AND CLASS STRUGGLES

Structures vs. Praxis

While analysing Miliband's contribution to the theory of state in the preceding chapter, we observed that the question of relative autonomy of the capitalist state should not be reduced to the interpersonal relationship between the state elite and the members of the capitalist class. Marx's materialist conception of history looks at the state as a superstructure formed on the given base. Hence understanding of the dialectical relationship between the base and superstructure is of utmost importance for all those who want to study the nature and dynamics of the capitalist state.

According to Marx and Engels what distinguishes men from animals is their capacity to produce their means of subsistence. Marx in his *Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* writes, "In the social production of their existence men inevitably enter into definite relations which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitute the economic structure, the real foundation on which arise a legal and political structure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness".¹ But what and how the men produce are determined by the material conditions. "The way in which men produce their means of production depends primarily on the nature of the actual means of subsistence that find in existence and have to produce".² By these one can

derive that the method of production refers to economic structure and it includes relations of production and productive forces with a motive force of production. The mode of production is something which exists, it is not merely a theoretical tool introduced by Marx and Engels to understand the social structure. Engels says in *Anti Duhring*, "there could be no question of building the laws of dialectics into nature, but of discovering them in it and evolving from it".³ The same could be said of the mode of production.

The significance of the mode of production is described by Marx in *The German Ideology*: "this mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part. As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are therefore coincides with what they produce and how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production".⁴ Further, the mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. In fact, it is on this base, as its by-product arises the entire superstructure composing of legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic institutions and their corresponding thinking. The social structure includes the base as well as the superstructure.

If one concludes that social structure refers to both the base and superstructure, then the question arises as to how they are related: Is the superstructure a mere reflection of the given base? Or can it be independent of the economic base, so that the study of any component of the superstructure can be done without relating it to other components of the social structure? Whereas the acceptance of the first one makes the study economically deterministic, the second one leads to superficial and compartmentalised study. Marx and Engels oppose both. They say, "neither legal relations, nor political forms could be comprehended whether by themselves or on the basis of a so-called general development of human mind, but on the contrary they originate in the material conditions of life, the totality of which embraces within the term, 'civil society'".⁵ Engels wrote to J. Bloch "According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimate element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this, neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into

a meaningless abstract, senseless phrase. The economic element is the basis, but various elements of the superstructure—political forms of class struggles, and its results to wit constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle etc. Judicial forms and even reflexes of all these struggles in the brains of the participants, political juristic, philosophical theories, religious views, and their further development into dogmas also in many cases preponderate in determining their form. There is an interaction of all these elements in which amid all the endless host of accidents, the economic movement finally asserts itself as necessary".⁶ Though the base and superstructure become an inseparable whole in the social movement, Marx and Engels recognised that each element is relatively independent and that each one has its own identity. For example, Marx says in his *Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*: "The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure. In studying such transformations, it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic foundations of production which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out".⁷ Stressing the active and positive role played by the state, a component of superstructure, Engels wrote to Schimdt in 1890, "Society gives rise to certain common functions which it cannot dispense with. The persons appointed for this purpose form a new branch of the division of labour within society. This gives them particular interests, distinct too from the interests of those who empowered them, they make themselves independent of the latter, and the state is in being. . . (this) new independent power, while having in the main to follow the movement of production, reacts in its turn, by virtue of its inherent relative independence—that is, the relative independence once transformed to it, and gradually further developed upon the conditions and course of production".⁸

From this discussion, one may come to the following conclusions about the dialectical relationship between base and the superstructure—(1) whereas the economic structure, meaning the mode of production is the base, the superstructure is composed of political, legal, ideological institutions and their corresponding thinking. (2) In course of historical development, different components of social structures interact with one another, thus making the base and superstructure an inseparable whole.

(3) Though each element of the superstructure is relatively independent of the base, and each one has necessary ability to consolidate or even change the base, its own nature and dynamics will be generally consistent with the economic movement. With this general understanding one may attempt to analyse the contribution of Poulantzas to the theory of capitalist state.

Nicos Poulantzas, who was already introduced as a critic of Miliband in the preceding chapter, developed a new theoretical approach to the study of capitalist state. Poulantzas was the product of Structural Marxist school, popularised in France, by Louis Althusser. Poulantzas's debates with Miliband and publication of his own works in English (*Political Power and Social Classes, Fascism and Dictatorship, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*) made him popular with most of the Marxian writers, especially in England and France.

Appreciation of Poulantzas's works is somewhat difficult, because it requires a good grounding in structuralism and structural Marxism. Hence before evaluating Poulantzas's theory of the capitalist state which he has developed in the structural Marxist tradition it is necessary to know basic contributions of structuralism.

Structuralism

French structuralism is an anthropological study made popular by Claude Levi Strauss.⁹ It became highly influential among the anthropologists in contemporary western Europe. Structuralism being antipositivist, dialectical and a historical ignores causality, origins and historical processes. It is against all psychologism and sociological teleology.

Structuralism attempts to explain the collective conscience in terms of a pan human, neurologically based unconscious mental dialectic.¹⁰ Following Durkheim, structuralists consider it possible to think of totality of thing with the help of 'molds' or structures present in human mind. These structures are not be confused with visible social relations. Structures constitute a level of reality not visible but present behind social relations, determining their appearance, dynamics and logic. Structural analysis precisely aims to discover these hidden structures.

Levi Strauss himself discovered 'the structure of generalised exchange' in his analysis of complex Australian Maori marital relations. His method involves finding in the collective mind of the pairs of 'binary opposition' which constitute the structures and 'mediators' or 'resolutions' produced as a result of the contradictions between these paired oppositions.

Structuralist analysis is opposed to empiricism, "Social structure has nothing to do with empirical reality, but with models built up after it."¹¹ The collective conscience is to be explained by grasping its meaning not by quantifying its relationship with other phenomena. Structure is a part of reality, but not of empirical reality. Structures according to the structuralists, are never directly visible and decipherable at the empirical level, but have to be "discovered by theoretical labour in the production of hypothesis and models".¹²

According to the structuralists, origin and evolution of a system can be analysed only after understanding the logic and mechanism of these structures. Though Levi Strauss himself admits the undoubted primacy of infrastructure, his critics point out that to him social phenomena "are nothing but objectivated systems of ideas" and that "mind has to be the ultimate explanation". Marvin Harris names such structuralism as "a synchronic form of Hegelian idealism, a stationary dialectic—a dialectic lacking in time and space".¹³

Structural Marxism

Despite the criticism against Levi Strauss on different grounds, his version of structuralism profoundly influenced a section of Marxist intellectuals in France. Though Levi Strauss was not a Marxist he had great respect for Marx. In fact he considered Marx, who first analysed the structures hidden behind capitalism as the founder of structuralism. Many intellectuals who were disgusted with historicist and existentialist approaches turned their attention towards Levi Strauss and his Marx, with a new outlook. The result was the emergence of a new school of thought called structural Marxism. A new research strategy adopted by it combines some aspects of structuralism with aspects of dialectical materialism.

Though some of the structural Marxists criticise Levi Strauss as essentially an idealist and as one who paid only lip service to the ultimate determination of superstructure by infrastructure, their points of concurrence with Levi Strauss in sharing aggressive antipositivism, blatant disregard for evolutionary movement and contempt for evolutionary methods brought them closer to Levi Strauss and his structuralism. In fact, structural Marxists found a significant degree of continuity between Marxism and structuralism. To them both Marx and Levi Strauss understood the difference between outward appearance and inner reality and then discovered the existence of hidden structures that obey internal dialectical laws of change. Both of them consider that all structures are determined ensembles of relations composed of specific elements, hence it is useless to insist on reducing one structure to another.

Structural Marxists, following Althusser consider that there is an epistemological break in Marx's thought and hence the Marxists should give greater importance to Marx's mature works than his earlier works, where Marx was still basing his social theory on the consciousness of individuals or on historical and evolutionary sequences. Only in later works causation is viewed quite differently. This makes the mature works distinct. "Causation or determination" in *Capital* he termed as "structural causality".¹⁴

Structural Marxists share the view that Marxism is not historicism and that Marx believed in the primacy of the study of structures over that of their genesis and evolution.¹⁵ Basing on the architecture of *Capital* they argue that Marx instead of starting with the theory of capital, first sets up the definition of a group of categories necessary to study the system of commodity production. He defines and discusses categories such as value, exchange value, commodity, money, capital and labour. Preparation of this ground enables Marx to analyse the internal structure of the capitalist system and understand the mechanism of the production of surplus value through the capital-labour relations. Only then, he takes up the problem of primitive accumulation, where he discusses the emergence of free workers and capitalists—two important classes necessary for capitalist mode of production. This study of genesis of the structure is made possible only under the guidance of a pre-existing knowledge of that structure.¹⁶

Structural Marxists consider that Hegelian dialectics has nothing to do with Marxian dialectics. This idea of Althusser, as he developed in his article *Contradiction and Overdetermination* is worth understanding. Marx says : "With him (Hegel) the dialectic is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again; if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell".¹⁷ According to Althusser when Marx says 'turning right side up again' he meant complete dissociation of his dialectics from Hegelian dialectics. Althusser points out the difference between Marx and Hegel. In Hegelian totality the mode of articulation of circular unity of equivalents is determined by self-development of the Idea. In his system, there exists only one contradiction *i.e.* the contradiction between the essence and phenomena of Idea and civil society. But this is not the case with Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao. Marxist totality is a complex unity of separate and specific levels which may be relatively autonomous of one another in a given historical social formation.¹⁸ Based on the analysis of Russian revolution as given by Lenin and Stalin, Althusser argues and mere presence of workers and capitalists will not lead to revolution—only accumulation of contradictions at different levels within the whole structure and their fusion into 'ruptural unity' provoke a revolutionary situation. Further, quoting from Mao's work *On Contradiction*, Althusser argues that among the different contradictions, there exist primary and secondary contradictions and within each contradiction, there remains primary and secondary aspects of contradictions. In other words there is uneven development of contradiction and hence there exists a dominant contradiction essential to the unity of the complexity itself. Then Althusser introduces two concepts, 'displacement' and 'condensation'. The first one describes the exchange of roles between the contradictions and their aspects and the second one denotes the identity of opposites in a real unity. As such Marxist contradiction is not univocal. It "reflects itself complexly-structurally-unevenly determined". To this Althusser used the term 'over-determined'.¹⁹

Althusser is a bitter critic of economic determinism which reduces everything to the economic base. Structural Marxists argue that secondary contradictions are not the pure phenomena of the principal contradiction, that the principal is not the essence and the secondary so many of its phenomena. Each structural whole consists of so many structures which are irreducible to any one structure. Althusser argues that Marx distinguished between relations of production and forces of production,

and never reduced one to another. This irreducibility should not be confined to economic structure since other social structures also have their own content and mode of functioning.²⁰ In all social formation, secondary contradictions are necessary conditions for the existence of principal contradictions. Similarly, superstructure is not the pure phenomena of the structure, but is a condition of structure's existence. Quoting Engels' letter to Bloch (1980), he says that in historical development of society, all levels of superstructure play an important role and that whereas the economy is only determinant in the last instance, dominant role may be taken by politics, religion, kinship or any other structure. Substitution of one phenomena for another ignoring the reality of social system amounts to 'vulgar materialism'. To put it in Althusser's words—"It is economism (mechanism) that sets up the hierarchy of instances once for all, assigns each its essence and role and defines universal meaning of their relations, it is economism that identifies roles and actors eternally; it is economism that identifies. . . in advance the determinant contradiction which for ever assimilates aspects such as forces of production, economy, practice to principal role and aspects such as relations of production, politics, ideology, theory to secondary role. . ."²¹

These ideas, are, in a sense, related to the structuralist concept of mode of production. Critics pointed out that structural Marxists like structuralists pay only lip service to the ultimate determination of superstructure by infrastructure. In fact few of them pack everything into infrastructure. To quote Godeliar, "a formerly superstructural element will become part of the relations of production".²²

To this criticism structural Marxists reply that the capitalist mode of production (CMP) which Marx constructs is not capitalism which exists. It is a set of logically connected relations which explain the inner link between various surface phenomena. Engels's letter of Bloch (1890) is interpreted to mean that the mode of production is composed of different levels or instances, the economic, political, ideological and theoretical. As such by CMP, they mean "not what is generally considered as economic, but a specific combination of various structures and practices, which appear as so many instances or levels *i.e.* as so many regional structures of this mode".²³ In such a system different structures though not equally powerful, articulate and influence one another. Each articulated element in the complex whole has its own history, developmental trajectory and independent time scale. Hence the structural whole

is viewed as the conjunctural fusion of several articulated elements with different natures.

Finally, in order to analyse Poulantzas's contribution, it is relevant to examine Althusser's and Balibar's idea of the capitalist mode of production. They think that Marx bases his study of capitalism on genealogy of different elements, (instead of focussing capitalism as gradual unfolding of one system to another through a series of contradictions). Marx's works provide three elements and two relations indispensable for all modes of production. The three elements include : (1) the worker or direct producer, (2) means of production and (3) the non-worker appropriating the surplus labour. The two relations derived from the combination of these elements include : (1) a relation of property referring to relations of production and (2) a relation of appropriation referring to relations of labour to means of production and productive forces.

What distinguishes capitalist mode of production from pre-capitalist mode is precisely the specific combination of these elements. In feudal mode of production, though the worker is not the owner, his labour and the instruments of production are unified and hence the surplus labour which can be distinguished in time and space can only be extracted by the intervention of non-economic pressure. But in the capitalist mode, the worker is divorced from both the actual ownership of property and also the instruments of production and hence here the surplus value is extracted by the ruling class without any direct need for regular political intervention.²⁴

In the light of this analysis of the contributions made by different structural Marxists who preceded Poulantzas, one may take up and critically analyse Poulantzas's theory of capitalist state.

Politics as an autonomous field of Study

Following Althusser, Poulantzas asserts that in the CMP the political is relatively autonomous of the economic. But unlike Althusser, Poulantzas assigns both the determinant and dominant roles to the economic.²⁵ Again, though Poulantzas is opposed to Balibar's view of capitalist mode of production because of his concentration on what is

generally called economic, Poulantzas uses Balibar's views for constructing a regional theory of politics.

Poulantzas sees a fundamental difference between precapitalist and capitalist modes of production. Whereas precapitalist modes of production are characterised by non-homology, in the C M P, one may "witness a combination of homology between the relations of property and of real appropriation; a homology which is set up by the separation of the direct producer from the means of production in the relation of real appropriation".²⁶ Further, in the precapitalist modes of production, surplus product is extracted by non-workers by other than economic pressure.²⁷ But surplus value in capitalism can be extracted by the capitalist in the economic process of production itself without any necessity of depending on political intervention.

Based on these peculiarities of capitalism, Poulantzas argues that since capitalism is characterised by instances, political and economic relatively autonomous of each other, regional theory of separate instances is possible. According to Poulantzas, Marx's *Capital* is his study of economic instance in the C M P. Just as Marx demonstrated the possibility of the study of economics separately, one may attempt to study politics and state as specific regions of study. Such study, Poulantzas argues, is both possible and desirable.

Poulantzas's view of Classes

Though Althusser speaks of political practice, in his works he did not give much importance to the role in classes and class struggles. But Poulantzas in his theory of capitalist state recognises their significance. However, he differs considerably from what is generally called classical Marxist view, Poulantzas is a bitter critic of economic, historicist and functionalist interpretation of 'class and class struggles'. According to Poulantzas it is insufficient to determine classes by relating them to the economic level alone. The relations of production are not enough for constitution of classes. To quote Poulantzas, "a class can be considered as a distinct and autonomous class, as a social force inside a social formation, only when its connection with the relations of production, its economic existence, is reflected on the other levels by . . . pertinent effects".²⁸ As such a social class can be identified either at economic

level or at the political or at the ideological level and can be located with regard to particular instance.

Interpreting Marx's terminology, Poulantzas argues that 'social formation' refers to 'structural level' and 'society' to 'the field of social relations'.²⁹ Structures and practices are two particular systems of ordered connections with structures of their own. Social classes always cover opposing class practices. They do not manifest within the structure. They are manifestations of the global effect of contradictions of different structures within the relations of production. Relations of production refers to structure, hence classes which include class practices should not be located within this structure.

Poulantzas identifies in Marx's texts two types of struggles-economic struggle and political struggle; and two types of interests-economic and political. Here also Poulantzas cautions not to identify economic, political and ideological struggles with economic political and ideological structures.³⁰ Dominance of one structure, say political, in the era of state monopoly capitalism need not automatically lead to dominance of political practice. Poulantzas considers that economic struggles and political struggles are not one and the same. Poulantzas argues that though economic struggles of the working class create an impact on other levels, they are ineffectual in political sense.

One may have a look at Poulantzas's view of petty bourgeoisie. His general stand that not merely relations of production, but reflection of one's place in economy, in political and ideological level through pertinent effects takes Poulantzas to a new height in his interpretation of the petty-bourgeois class. Along with groups such as peasants and artisans, Poulantzas includes in the class of petty bourgeoisie all those non-productive salaried employees working in banks, insurance corporations, sales and advertising departments, on the pretext that they do not produce but only help in realisation of surplus value. Though all of them may not occupy same position in economy, they can be included under one class because all of them exert similar effects or force in political and ideological levels. This view of petty bourgeoisie become important in his analyses of fascism.³¹

Capitalist State : State apparatus and State power

Poulantzas defines capitalist state as a factor of unity in a capitalist formation, composed of specific and relatively autonomous levels.³² His whole conception of the nature of capitalist state is based on this functionalist definition. According to classical Marxism, the state includes the repressive apparatus which includes military, police, judiciary, bureaucracy, legislature and government *etc.* Later Gramsci, who assigned the role of ideological hegemony to the state defined the state as political society plus civil society. Though Althusser opposes Gramsci on certain grounds he seems to have accepted this contribution of Gramsci. This becomes clear when we look at Althusser's definition of the state as repression plus ideology.³³

Poulantzas criticises Althusser's definition on the ground that it limits the possibility of understanding the role of modern state in all fields. Especially understating of Lenin's theory of state monopoly capitalism and revolution become impossible with such definition. However, Poulantzas also considers that ideological institutions can become a part of the state apparatus. He maintains that along with repressive character of the state, Marxist analysis should cover its political and ideological role also. As such Poulantzas' system of state is composed of several institutions of which certain have a principally repressive role and others principally ideological role. Poulantzas uses the terms 'State repressive apparatus' (singular) and state 'ideological apparatuses' (plural) to denote that the repressive apparatus has internal unity and cohesion, whereas ideological institutions enjoy relative autonomy. The state ideological apparatuses which includes churches, political parties, schools and even family to an extent become a part of the state system by assisting reproduction of society and thereby maintaining class domination.³⁴ Though Poulantzas recognises the increasing economic role of the modern state, he does not include economic institutions as part of the state system, on the ground that Marxism defines state as political organiser and that extraction of surplus value is not the basic function of the state.³⁵ Further, Poulantzas clearly states that the relations between repressive apparatus and state ideological apparatuses and also the relations among various branches in each of them will change from time to time depending on the objective necessities.

The complex structure of state allows the capitalist state to bring unity of the power bloc by accommodating various classes and class fractions within it. Generally, the hegemonic class or class fraction will have access to the nucleus of the state *i.e.* the repressive state apparatus. Other non-hegemonic classes and fractions of the power bloc are allowed to control other branches of the state system.

This view indirectly shapes Poulantzas's definition of power. Poulantzas defines power as the capacity of a class to realise its specific objective interests. Poulantzas considers that this power is, however, limited by the field of practices. It depends on the capacity of other classes to realise their interests. These class interests are to be located not in structures but in the field of practices. Based on such view of power, Poulantzas argues that the institutions of state do not have any power of their own. They are only the political power centres of the classes. Since power concentrated in an institution is a class power, the institutions must be considered according to their impact in the field of class struggles. However, it should not lead to the conclusion that the state institutions are mere puppets of one or the other class of a capitalist society. To quote Poulantzas, "State power is not a machine or an instrument, a simple object coveted by various classes, nor is it divided into parts, which if not in the hands of someone, must automatically be in the hands of other; rather it is an ensemble of structures".³⁶ As such, state institutions enjoy relative autonomy, but this is not due to the fact that they have the power of their own. What make state institutions relatively autonomous of classes is their relation to the structures.

Relative Autonomy of the Capitalist State

Poulantzas's stand against instrumentalist theory of state leads him to examine the relative autonomy that the capitalist state enjoy vis-a-vis classes and class struggles. By relative autonomy, Poulantzas does not mean that the state becomes independent of all classes and hence it is possible for the state to act as a neutral authority. As he says, relative autonomy of the state "in the last analysis is only that autonomy necessary for the hegemonic organisation of the dominant classes; *i.e.* it is only that relative autonomy which is indispensable for the unambiguous power of these classes".³⁷

How is relative autonomy of the state made possible? Firstly, by the separation of political from economic in the C M P. Secondly, by the specificity of the constitution of classes and class struggles in the C M P and social formation.³⁸

Why does relative autonomy of the state become necessary? It becomes necessary for the state to be able to act as a factor of unity in a capitalist formation composed of specific and relatively autonomous levels. This attribute assigns to the state the character of unity proper to the institutionalised power which by presenting a specific internal cohesion to the state institutions prevents the strained relations between classes and fractions of the power bloc from becoming self destructive.

The relative autonomy has nothing to do with equilibrium of classes of 'catastrophic equilibrium'. Poulantzas considers it to be a general feature of the state in the capitalist mode of production. Particular combination of classes only determine the extent of relative autonomy and it never precludes relative autonomy of the state as such at any time. This view of relative autonomy is based on Poulantzas's interpretation of Marx's ideas on Bonapartism.

The phenomenon of Bonapartism corresponds to the phase of expanded reproduction of capitalism. The concrete historical case of Bonapartism originates due to the contradictions of class and class fractions in power and inability of any one class or class fractions to become hegemonic enough to unite the power bloc. Poulantzas gives his own interpretations to Marx's analysis. When Marx talks of 'antagonism between state and society'. Poulantzas interprets it as dislocation and respective autonomy of political from the economic struggle. Similarly, Marx and Engels analysis of Bonaparte playing one class against the other means the autonomy of state from all classes including the dominant class. Bonaparte's dependence on the peasantry, the biggest class in France means the necessity of state to depend on the popular will to confront with individual interests of the bourgeoisie. Failure of the party of order signifies the inability of the bourgeoisie to rule itself. The emergence of Bonaparte coincides with the necessity of the state to constitute the unity of power bloc under the hegemony of the dominant class or class fraction. Basing himself on these grounds, Poulantzas studies how the capitalist state is related to class and class struggles.³⁹

Capitalist State and Dominated Classes

According to Poulantzas, state is not a class instrument, it is dominant class's political power centre and the organising agent of their political struggle. It is not the state's responsibility to take care of the economic interests of the bourgeoisie. The flexibility of the state allows certain concessions to the dominated classes within the limits set by the system. The state sees that such concessions only help further extension of political hegemony of the dominant classes over the dominated. Relative autonomy of the state vis-a-vis the economic power centres makes extension of social policy for the benefit of the dominated classes and at the same time the curtailment of the economic power of the dominant class so as to protect their political interests. Stressing the difference between the economic and political struggles, he strikes a note caution not to misunderstand that the era of social policy changed the nature of the capitalist state.⁴⁰

Capitalist State and Dominant Classes

In place of the notion that one class or class fraction acts as the ruling class, Poulantzas brings in the view that ruling class in all capitalist social formations consists of several classes and class fractions. To explain this Poulantzas coins the term, 'power bloc'. Power bloc constituted under the protection of the hegemonic classes or fractions of the bloc. Existence of so many classes and class fractions in the power bloc becomes possible due to (1) the very capitalist relations of production which gives birth to fractions; (2) the dominance of the C M P over other modes of production; (3) structure of the state which makes it possible for several fractions to present in the political scene.⁴¹

Though power bloc comes into existence, it faces numerous obstacles in realizing its own interests either due to the contradictory interests of different classes and fractions within it or due to the inability of the hegemonic class or fraction to extend its influence over all other classes and class fractions in the power bloc. This situation demands the state to intervene to act as the factor of political unity of power bloc under the protection of hegemonised class or class fraction. The state can play this role due to its intrinsic unity as against plurality of power blocs.

Poulantzas is opposed to the view that the state is a simple tool or an obedient clerk of the dominant class or fraction. It is because the power bloc does not consist of one politically homogeneous class that can guide the actions of the state. Moreover, as it is examined, the state as a structure is relatively autonomous of classes and class fractions which constitute the level of practices. As such the state instead of being a tool in the hands of the class, becomes an active unifier of the power bloc. Opposing the interpretation of the state monopoly capitalism as the state of monopolists, Poulantzas argues that the capitalist state while performing the function of constituting the unity of the power bloc, entertains special relationship with the hegemonic class or fractions in order to extend its hegemony over other class and class fractions of the power bloc. By this, however, the state does not become a puppet of the hegemonic class or fraction. Rather, if necessary the state presents itself as guarantor of various classes against hegemonic classes and it may play one class against another. The state does all these things only as political organiser of the dominant class.

Capitalist State and Class Struggle :

It was stated that the separation of direct producer from means of production assigns of state a specific autonomy vis-a-vis relations of production. The autonomisation reflect in the field of class struggle as autonomy of economic class struggle from political class struggles. As a result the state has to confront in the field of social relations, two kinds of struggles viz. economic struggle and political struggle.

The development of capitalism and consequent socialisation of production brings into existence two kinds of threats of the systems, one in the form of growing unity of the Working class and the other in the form of mounting antagonistic contradiction within the power bloc which lead to its break up. In reality, it is the duty of the hegemonic class or fraction to protect the power bloc under its hegemony and project its interests as the interests of the people. It should be able to perpetuate the existing social relations by maintaining unstable equilibrium of social classes through a series of compromises. By using political and ideological organisation it should represent itself as the representative of people and embodiment of the unity of the nation.⁴² But the (hegemonic class or fraction, in the wake of mounting obstacles, fails to fulfil its responsibilities. Some of the difficulties, in the realisation of these necessities are (1)

internal functioning of the bourgeois class, (2) continued existence of small scale producers and (3) growing threat of working class unity.

In such a situation the state is forced to act as the political organiser of the dominant classes. Accordingly the state acts as a factor of political organisation of dominant classes, and at the same time as a factor of political disorganisation of the dominated classes. The state reorganises the power bloc under the hegemony of dominant class or fractions. At the same time it attempts to disunite the working class, either by conceding certain economic demands of the workers or by extending the hegemony of dominant classes over the dominated class with the help of ideological state apparatuses.⁴³

While acting as the political organiser of the dominant class, it acts in specific relation to the political parties of these classes. Sometimes, parties may be allowed, side by side with the state to act as political organiser, or at times it may substitute itself for the parties. But in critical conditions, it may take total control of the political interests of the classes.

As such in capitalism, relative autonomy depends on the characteristics peculiar to the economic and political class struggle in the capitalist social formation.⁴⁴ This relative autonomy has very little to do with the equilibrium of social forces. The state is always relatively autonomous of class struggles, though 'the variations and modalities of this relative autonomy depends upon the concrete relation between social forces in the field of the political class struggle, in particular, they depend on the political struggle of the dominated classes'.⁴⁵

Fascism and Fascist State :

The phenomenon of fascism, says Poulantzas, can be understood only when it is located within the era of imperialism characterised by the modification in the state's role. He thinks that though Lenin in his pamphlet on imperialism stresses, in the main, its economic aspect, imperialism is not to be considered as a simple economic phenomenon. According to Poulantzas "imperialism considered as a stage in the ensemble of capitalist process in not infact just a question of modification in the economic domain..... These economic factors actually determine a

new articulation of the ensemble of capitalist system, thereby producing profound changes in politics and ideology".⁴⁶

Poulantzas does not hold that all parliamentary democratic states necessarily tend to become fascist states. Fascism could rise its head in Germany and Italy because of the peculiar articulation of different levels of structures and practices during the period of transition to monopoly capitalism. During that period, Russia, Germany and Italy constituted the weakest links in the imperialist chain. Poulantzas argues that there were many obstacles in the path of development of monopoly capitalism. Some of them mentioned by Poulantzas include failure of bourgeois democratic revolutions, unaccomplished national unifications, war burden, economic crises, rise of the working class solidarity strength, and inability of the monopolists to extend their hegemony over other classes and class monopoly capitalism combined with sharpening class contradictions and consequent crises within the state apparatus, peculiar to the phase of transition moved Germany and Italy on the path of Fascism. It is precisely, due to the absence of similar contradictions in other countries like Britain and USA, they could escape fascism even though they also happened to be imperialist nations.

Poulantzas criticises the Comintern's economistic view of fascism. According to him, it is wrong to consider that the growth of fascism was the preconceived plan of the capitalists. In other words, it is wrong to suppose that the fascists were the paid agents of the monopolists. He also opposes the view that whereas the parliamentary republic is the instrument of the whole capitalist class, the fascist state is a puppet in the hands of the monopolists. Such a stand, according to Poulantzas, contradicts the fact that fascism represents the contradictory interests of various classes and thus denies the autonomy that the state enjoys.

Poulantzas maintains that throughout the period of fascism, the state was relatively autonomous of the dominant classes. It could exercise autonomy because of two factors: (1) inner contradictions within the power bloc which necessitated reorganisation of power bloc under the hegemony of the monopolist fraction and (2) contradiction between dominant and dominated classes which requires the state to mediate and reestablish political domination and hegemony of the power bloc.⁴⁷

The relative autonomy of fascist state has nothing to do with equilibrium of class forces as Thalheimer interpreted. Also, it has nothing to do with Bonapartism as Miliband conceives. In fact, Poulantzas considers such interpretations to be unmarxian. Fascist state is relatively autonomous only to the extent that the dominant classes need reorganisation of power bloc under the protection of hegemonic fraction. Further identifying fascism with Bonapartism is not correct, for fascism is the product of specific contradictions in Germany and Italy, peculiar to the phase of transition to monopoly capitalism.

Finally one needs to know the role that Poulantzas assigns to the petty bourgeoisie. Though Poulantzas opposes the view that fascist state was the state of the petty bourgeoisie he gives considerable importance to this petty bourgeoisie, the class ignored by Comintern.⁴⁸ The rise of fascism corresponds to the ideological, political and economic crises of petty bourgeoisie. In fascism the petty bourgeoisie constituted itself into an authentic force through the fascist parties. In the first phase of fascism the fascist party acted like the representative of petty bourgeoisie and it voiced their grievances and aspirations. 'This position, however, changed once the fascist parties came to governmental power and then they become subservient to the interests of the state. In the phase, Poulantzas sees a peculiar and indirect alliance of the petty bourgeoisie with big monopoly capitalists. To quote Poulantzas, "In short, the historical role of fascism was to achieve an alliance between big capital and petty bourgeoisie, in the very conjuncture in which their contradiction were being actually intensified".⁴⁹ Poulantzas cautions that such alliance however is not mechanical. It was never openly declared, it took the form of petty bourgeoisie support for a form of state whose ties with the interests of big capital it did not understand. In ideological sense, ideology of fascist state corresponds to the interests of big capital. But astonishingly, peculiar ideological position that petty bourgeoisie subscribed could only help the monopoly capital. The points of collusion between imperialist and petty bourgeois ideologies include: (1) statutory aspect, cult of state, (2) elitist aspect with racist conception, (3) anti juridical aspect, blind acceptance of leaders, command or law. (4) nationalist jingoist aspect, (5) militarism, (6) anticlericalism, (7) role of family and education, (8) obscurantism and anti intellectualism and (9) corporatism. Practice of such ideology though satisfied at times the subjective intentions of the petty bourgeoisie, in reality, however, it only served the objective interests of the big capitalism.

Poulantzas argues that during the first phase of fascism in power, the petty bourgeoisie became the ruling class. With the stabilisation step it fell back to the position in charge of the state apparatus.⁵⁰ Even in this role, the petty bourgeoisie continued to exercise considerable influence on the state apparatus and determine the particular forms that they took.

To conclude, according to Poulantzas, fascist state was an exceptional form of capitalist state and a specific form of regime. The fascist phase involved in reorganisation of the state repressive apparatus as well as the state ideological apparatuses; the dominant role being assigned to the arbitrary will of the leaders of the state. Fascist state suspended popular elections. Executive prevailed over the legislature. The state was thoroughly bureaucratised. The state intervenes effectively in economy. Going farther from Althusser, Poulantzas accepts the role played by the state in reproduction of means of production, reproduction of labour power and also in reproduction of relations of production. But this so-called state regulation never went to jeopardise the traditional big capital, whose interests it constantly guaranteed.⁵¹

Poulantzas and His Critics

Poulantzas's theory of capitalist state was critically analysed by many a European American, and Latin American scholars. Some of them very effectively attempted to expose the defects of the problematic he adopted and the interpretation he gave. In return Poulantzas tried to clarify his position by responding to the critics. A brief account of this debate is given here.

Perhaps, the first attack came from Ralph Miliband, whose work *The State in Capitalist Society* (1969) was criticised by Poulantzas. Miliband in his two articles, *Reply to Nicos Poulantzas* (1969) and *Poulantzas and the Capitalist State* (1973) attempts to point out what he considers to be the flaws in Poulantzas's formulations. According to Miliband, Poulantzas only substitutes the notion of structural constraints for the notion of ruling class. State is only compelled to be merest functionaries and executants of the policies determined by the system. But since within the system, the ruling class is the dominant class, Poulantzas is back at the point of subordination of the state elite to ruling class.⁵² The relative autonomy of state, which Poulantzas wants to examine became impossible with this approach of 'structural superdeter-

minism' which makes understanding of the dialectical relationship between the structure and system impossible. Though structural perspective is not without certain merits, Miliband cautions that it may lead to a hyper structuralist trap, which deprives agents of any freedom of choice and manoeuvre and turns them into the 'bearers' of objective forces which they are unable to effect. This perspective is but another form of determinism—which is alien to Marxism and in any case false. . ."⁵³

This criticism is refuted by Poulantzas on the plea that he was never a structuralist, Poulantzas claims that in his subsequent books, for example, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, he gives considerable importance to the role of classes and class struggles. He says that he tried to clear off the confusion created by his earlier works by eliminating the rigid separation between structures and practices and by giving primacy to the class practices and class struggles over the structures.⁵⁴ However, to the criticism that he did not give considerable importance to the role of individuals and creative persons, to human freedom and action, free will and human choice, Poulantzas refuses to answer, on the grounds that he answered them already in his books.

Laclau who intervenes in the debate considers that the relative autonomy and the structural constraints are not incompatible as Miliband thinks. According to Poulantzas, relative autonomy is a structural element, the product of particular articulation between instances of mode of production. Poulantzas insists that he examined relative autonomy of the state from two directions—first by separating the political from the economic within the CMP and secondly by analysing the specificity of constitution of classes and class struggles within it. To Miliband's question, how relative is relative autonomy and what makes it to be more or less, Poulantzas seems to have answered in his first book, *Political Power and Social Classes* itself when he says, "within limits imposed by the relation between the structures and the field of class struggles, this relative autonomy can vary according to (1) the modalities taken on by its function vis-a-vis the dominant classes and (2) the concrete relation between the forces present".⁵⁵

Related to it is their conception of relation between class power and state power. Miliband who considers "that there is a basic distinction to be made between class power and state power" complains about "Poulantzas' failure to make the necessary distinction between class power

and state power. State power is the main and ultimate—but not the only means whereby class power is assured and maintained... The blurring of the distinction between class power and state power by Poulantzas makes any such analysis (of relative autonomy of the state) impossible".⁵⁶ In his reply, criticising Miliband for lack of common sense, Poulantzas pleads that by comprehending relations of power as class relations, he in fact broke with structuralism which Miliband attributes to him. According to Poulantzas, viewing of class power and state power as different relations of externality necessarily leads to subordination of class to state power or state to class power, thus welcoming instrumentalist or revisionist theories of state. By locating relative autonomy at the level of separation of political from economic and by seeking the state as the resultant of class contradictions and as the structure "which is both shot through and constituted with and by these class contradictions", Poulantzas claims that he overcomes the defects of other approaches.⁵⁷

Miliband who calls the approach of Poulantzas as 'structural superdeterminism' or 'structural abstractionism' argues that such approach leads Poulantzas into the world of structures and levels which have very little to do with historical reality. Poulantzas according to Miliband fails to understand different forms of capitalist state. Further, "He seems... to have an absurdly exaggerated fear of empiricist contamination",⁵⁸ and hence never likes to supplement his theory with empirical proofs. Opposing this point Poulantzas reacts with an assertion that all his works provided sufficient historical data. Poulantzas argues that he is for rigorous interpretation of data within a theoretical framework unlike empiricists or neopositivists who use facts without any problematic. On this Poulantzas was sensitive to historical data and that he was aware of the difference between constitutional and fascist forms of state is evident from his work, *Fascism and Dictatorship*.

However, one criticism of Miliband supported by Laclau, but not responded to by Poulantzas is the issue of Bonapartism. Miliband asserts that "Bonapartism is not the religion of the bourgeoisie at all—it is its last resort in the conditions of political instability so great as to present a threat to the maintenance of the existing social order, including of course the system of domination which is the central part of that order".⁵⁹ It is not known why Poulantzas who bases his theory of capitalist state mainly on his interpretation of Bonapartism does not react to this criticism.

In fact lack of mutual understanding unnecessarily prolonged Miliband-Poulantzas debate. Pointing out this Laclau clarifies, "In short Miliband is interested in determining concrete channels which in western Europe establish the link between fractions which hold power and dominant classes and in that emphasise that element of unity between the two. Poulantzas by contrast, is interested in determining at the theoretical level, the autonomous character of political within the CMP and in that he emphasizes the element of separation between the dominant class and fractions holding power. They are in fact analysing different problems which they did not notice".⁶⁰

Laclau goes farther than reviewing Miliband-Poulantzas debate and critically reflects on certain aspects of Poulantzas's theory. Commenting on the approach, Laclau says that Poulantzas does not try to demonstrate, the internal contradictions of the problematic which he rejects and the forms in which his own problematic supercedes the points of discrepancy. This defect was pointed out by Laclau from Poulantzas's treatment of historicist view of classes.⁶¹ Secondly, Laclau says that though abstraction is necessary for scientific knowledge, this aspect reaches such heights that Poulantzas' analysis leads to formalism where descriptive categories and symbolic function of concepts predominate its theoretical substance.⁶² Laclau considers the distinction made by structural Marxists between determinant in the last instance and dominant role as a series of metaphors which attempt to resolve through symbols of little theoretical content. Laclau calls it an artificial problem created by the metaphysics of instances.

Laclau reacting to their concept of mode of production, says: "We find ourselves with three instances established purely in descriptive ways... why only three? What has been the method of their deduction? Does there exist any logical link between them". Commenting on the crux of Balibar and Poulantzas analysis of the notion of 'extra economic coercion', Laclau argues that Marx uses the term 'economic' in two ways, understanding it at two different levels of abstraction to formulate two different theoretical structures. In one sense, it is used as synonymous with level of production and in another sense it is referred to the sphere of commodity and market.⁶³ Poulantzas who replies to other points of Laclau apologetically and that too unconvincingly, does not react to these important points of Laclau's criticism.

It is a debate among writers who accepted the specificity of politics. Another set of critics, who reject this idea, point out various other shortcomings of Poulantzas. Colin Crouch points out that what Poulantzas gives after abandoning instrumentalist view is the definition of state as one that is functionalist. According to Poulantzas the state automatically takes care of "the general interest of the capital because it is the role assigned to the State". Poulantzas discusses general theory in such a high level of abstraction that he fails to explain why "a particular fraction of British capital—the financial sector has been able to dominate state policies to the detriment of the long term interests of capital as a whole".⁶⁴ Finally one may summarise the criticism of Holloway and Picciotto and other German derivativists in the following manner. According to them Poulantzas never considers it important to analyse Marxist doctrine that political forms can be understood only when it is related to the anatomy of civil society. Poulantzas's theory is not based on the historical materialist concepts developed by Marx in his *Capital*. He approaches only the political works of Marx, that too in a fragmented fashion. Poulantzas's view of relative autonomy of the political and the economic "leads him to neglect the all-important question of the nature of separation of and relation between these instances"⁶⁵ His wrong approach makes Poulantzas identify economic with production relations and class struggle with the realm of the political. Because of these limitations in Poulantzas's theory of state, "There is not analysis of the development of capitalist society, of the changing forms of state-society relations and of the state itself. . . there is no systematic analysis of the relation between the capitalist state and its basis, capitalist exploitation of the working class in the process of accumulation, so too there is no analysis of the constraints and limitations which the nature of capitalist accumulation imposes upon state action".⁶⁶

Estimate :

French structural Marxism was a timely response in the West to the problems created by the historicist, humanist and existentialist interpretations of Marxism. The structural Marxists exposed the inadequacy of empiricist approach and tried to study the structures hidden beneath the surface. Their uncompromising fight against economism and their recognition of important roles played by ideology and politics need to be appreciated.

In this regard, Althusser's contributions to the enrichment of Marxism are in deed significant. Though one may not agree with him Althusser's criticism of historicism and Hegelian dialectics is worth understanding. Althusser's idea of 'epistemological break' is an attack on all those intellectuals who sought to see true Marxism in the works of young Marx who was still under the influence of Hegelian idealism or Fuerbachean humanism. Accepting the contributions made by Lenin, Stalin and Mao, Althusser tries to further develop and enrich Marxian dialectics. In this attempt, he derives new concepts like 'displacement', 'condensation' and 'over determination' that perfect Marxian understanding of the nature of contradictions. Althusser attempts to show that Marx and Engels, unlike Hegel, understand the active and positive role played by the various components of the superstructure in social development. Althusser considers that all elements of the social structure—economy, politics and ideology are equally important and that each element relatively autonomous of another, has its own history, development trajectory and independent time scale.

Convinced by Althusser's argument many of his students undertook to study different aspects of society. Among them, Poulantzas is the first person, who attempted to develop a systematic regional theory of politics and state. He is a bitter critic of the instrumentalist view, which reduces the state to a mere tool in the hands of the dominant class. He fights out economistic interpretations of state, and shows that nature and dynamics of the bourgeois state cannot be reduced to the necessities of the economy. Poulantzas's analysis of Bonapartism, imperialism and fascism, where he sheds light on hitherto untouched aspects reveal a deep understanding. He considerably deviates from some Marxists, such as Laclau and Miliband in his method of determining one's class position. Though Poulantzas's works, in the main within structural Marxist problematic, he tries to overcome structuralist dogmas by assigning more importance to classes and class struggles over structures. Again, despite his opposition to Anglo-American empiricist approach, he does not fail to produce facts to substantiate his arguments.'

Though the contributions of the structural Marxists are somewhat novel, one should be cautious in evaluating each of their contributions.

Firstly, one may look at the structural marxist conception of the mode of production. Though Marx and Engels accept that superstructure

plays an active and positive role, as is examined in the beginning of this chapter, they did not consider superstructure as a part of the mode of production. According to Marx and Engels, 'mode of production' is something which actually exists. It is not merely a theoretical tool devised by them to understand social dynamics, as the structural marxists conceive.

Further, as we have seen earlier, Engels's letter to Bloch in 1890 speaks of the important role played by the superstructure, but, this does not lead to the conclusion that the elements of superstructure, say politics or ideology, become part of the mode of production. Here one may look at structural Marxist's conceptions of dominant and determinant roles. Whereas Althusser seems to consider that economy plays a determinant role, Poulantzas maintains that the economy takes both the determinant and dominant roles. But in the actual course of social development, the element that plays dominant role is never constant. What element takes over the dominant role depends on the objective necessity of social development. At times, though not always, even, economy takes over the dominant role. For example, politics plays dominant role at the time of revolution. It even changes the economic base. But, once the new economic base is created, the economy takes over dominant role for a while, and gives birth to new political and ideological institutions.

Further, is it possible or even desirable, to study politics without relating it to other aspects of society? Can a comprehensive study of any particular phenomenon be achieved by such fragmented approach? At least, the dialectical materialist approach developed by the classical Marxists opposes such compartmentalised approach. Engels says, "Dialectics. . . comprehends things and their representations, ideas, in their essential connection, concatenation, motion, origin and ending."⁶⁷ In *Philosophical Notebooks*, Lenin notes, "Individual Being (an object, a phenomenon etc) is (only) one side of the Idea (of truth). Truth requires still other sides of reality, which likewise appear only as independent and individual. . . Only in their totality (zusammen) and in their relation (Beziehung) is truth realised"⁶⁸.

Then, coming to the concept of relative autonomy, Poulantzas seems to consider, that, this attribute is specific only to the state in the capitalist societies. But Marx and Engels do not entertain this view.

Engels in his mature work, *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State* says, "In order that these antagonisms; classes with conflicting economic interests might not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggles, it becomes necessary to have a power seemingly standing above society, that would alleviate the conflict and keep it within the bounds or order and this power arisen out of society, but placing itself above it, and alienating itself more and more from it, is the state."⁶⁹ Engels is referring here to the state in general, not to any particular state, say the capitalist state. Though it is true that the direct producers in capitalism are deprived of the means of production and instruments of production, one may question, how do these aspects lead to the separation of political from economic and hence to the conclusion that the capitalist state is relatively autonomous of classes? Here one needs to remember Stalin's answer to the question of extra economic coercion in feudalism: "Of course, extra economic coercion did play a part in strengthening the economic power of the feudal landlords, however not it, but feudal ownership of the land was the basis of feudalism".⁷⁰ So, also in capitalism, absence of extra economic coercion is to be considered as a peculiar feature bearing some influence; and nothing more than that. It is not to be considered as the general law of capitalist social formation.

Poulantzas has a better understanding of the nature and role of the state officials and also of the dynamics of the different branches of the state machinery. He thinks that state uses ideology for consolidating the existing system. But the consideration by Althusser and Poulantzas, that, the ideology become a part of politics is subject to criticism. As analysed in the beginning of the chapter, state and ideology are different components of the superstructure. It is true they influence each other, either to consolidate or to change the base. Just because state uses ideology, one should not make ideology a part of the state system. Seen in this light, the derivation of the concepts such as Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) or state ideological apparatuses seem to pose more problems than it can solve.

Poulantzas distinguishes Fascist state from the Bonapartist state. His criticism of the economic interpretations of the Comintern and his concentration on the importance of politics and ideology, as well as the roles played by different classes in bringing about fascism in Germany

and Italy are indeed worth noting. However whereas it is wrong to attribute fascism only to the economic condition, it is equally wrong to underestimate, in a comprehensive analysis of fascism, economic factors such as sporadic development of capitalism, the problem of capital accumulation, the foundation of state monopoly capitalism, the need for colonial markets and hence the necessity of redivision of world market etc. Poulantzas does not totally ignore economic factors. But, as Holloway and Picciotto put it, "where he does so only in the context of the dominant classes—contradiction between big and medium capital, capitalists and landowners etc."⁷¹ Further, his empirical analysis of the relations between various classes in Germany and Italy may be correct, but, if he argues that without similar class alliances there cannot be fascism in other countries, then he may not be right. Just as the class forces that allied themselves in bringing about bourgeoisie democracy or socialism, differ from one country to another, the class alliances, in case of fascism, can be different from one country to another. To say that fascism cannot come in countries where such class forces and class alliances (say between petty bourgeoisie and monopolists) do not exist is an unscientific argument.

Finally, one can discuss the role assigned to individuals. Althusser in his stress on structures seems to have neglected the conscious role of individuals or classes. Though Poulantzas does not neglect the significance of class practices, he underestimates the ability of class organisations of the bourgeoisie. He says, that, he sees individuals as supports or bearers of the structure. But what actually Poulantzas means by the words 'supports' or 'bearers' is not clear. Marx in his *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* says; "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please, they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, from the past"⁷² Though structural constraints are noted, Marx clearly says in the passage that history is made by men, not by structures. Further, Third Thesis on Fierbich reads, "The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing and that therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men that change circumstances and that educator himself needs educating"⁷³ Engels also cautions: "In one point the history of the development of society proves to be essentially different from that of nature. In nature. . . there are only blind unconscious agencies acting upon one another. In history of society, on the other hand, the actors are all endowed with consciousness, men are acting

with deliberation or passion working towards definite goals, nothing happens without a conscious purpose, without an intended aim'.⁷⁴ One should not forget that the state, the relations of production etc. which influence people, are the structures that are brought into being and constantly influenced—even after they become relatively autonomous—by the conscious role of the individuals.

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