

istrative set up, the harvesting calendar, a glossary, a historical chronology, details about the survey, an attempt to introduce to the non-statisticians the statistical tools used in the study, and quite a comprehensive bibliography.

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ASOKA BANDARAGE: Colonialism in Sri Lanka: The Political Economy of the Kandyan Highlands, 1833-1886. (Studies in the Social Sciences, Vol. 39). Berlin/New York/Amsterdam: Mouton Publishers, 1983. XIV, 404 pages. DM 56.-

Whether presented as theories of modernisation or underdevelopment, works in the sociology of developing countries preponderate in economic analyses at the cost of social-structural ones, general theoretical and macrosociological studies at the cost of theoretically guided social-historical ones.

The essence of the problem is the question about causes of underdevelopment and conditions of development. In the scholarly discussion the following articulations of this question have been shown to be crucial:

- (1) the matter of the social-historical necessity of bourgeois modes of production and the chances of late capitalistic development;
- (2) that of the specific social structures of the Third World, particularly the relationship between the dominant capitalistic and the subordinate pre-capitalistic modes of production and their effective mechanisms;
- (3) that of the relative importance and interaction of external factors generated by the world market and internal production relations of underdevelopment;
- (4) that of the historical function of European colonialism and its lingering after-effects on contemporary structures and processes of underdevelopment.

Asoka Bandarage's book proposes answers to some of these questions through a theoretically guided case study. In the course of this he also attempts to clarify systematically the ends, means and results of British colonial politics in a developing country, to illustrate the methodological necessity and fruitfulness of a synthetic (holistic) approach, and to contribute to the theoretical analysis of the Third World.

Bandarage treats the period of "classical colonialism" originating in the European industrial revolution and the consequent rise to supremacy of industrial over mercantile capital. It was at this time that an international production and exchange system emerged into which all countries and societies were successively incorporated. This integration necessarily brought with it a revolution of existing social relations. Bandarage's theme is precisely this socio-economic transformation of the feudalistic Kingdom of Kandy into a capitalistic market-economy oriented toward the world market.

In 1833 Kandy was united with the rest of Ceylon under a unified administra-

tion and jurisdiction. Decisive for its future was the concomitant and violent introduction of bourgeois property rights with their unlimited legal rights of usufruct, inheritance and disposal. The socio-economic realisation of these new legal norms in the form of capitalistic production relations crystallised in the setting up of plantations that were to become the center of an import-export economy. As background to his analysis of this transformation process Bandarage inserts a socio-historical study of Kandy's pre-colonial social structures and mercantile-capitalistic colonial politics. He then proceeds to analyse the process itself under three headings. First he thoroughly documents and analyses the two elements of primitive accumulation: the commercialisation and concentration of land (the main means of production) and the interdependent commercialisation of labour. With equal thoroughness he then discusses the causes and conditions leading to the eventual import of foreign labour for the plantations. Finally, he treats the decisive role of the colonial state. This role is shown to have had its origin in the state's direct and indirect creation of private capitalistic relations (its principle interest) and in its political and military control of colonial antagonisms.

This entire case study is embedded in a general theoretical discussion indebted to neo-Marxism. The distinguishing feature of Bandarage's conception consists in linking dependency theory and world-system analysis (Frank, Wallerstein) with the topos of "colonial modes of production" (Alavi, Banaji), and thus emphasizing the interaction between external (dominant) determinants and factors of internal production relations (with their own dynamic in the structure and process of underdevelopment). This emphasis (the so-called "articulation mode of production") leads to a discussion of the interaction between the different modes of production, the corresponding social groups constituted by them, and the concrete economic and political conflicts of the resulting social configuration.

This last line of argumentation should be regarded as a methodological principle for empirical research and its systematic treatment. Its fruitfulness is proved in the historical case study itself. Using a wealth of data, Bandarage refutes the common dualistic view of Ceylon (p.324 f. ; 328). With its plantation economy of imported labour, foodstuffs, means of production and capital on the one hand and its export of plantation produce and its profits on the other, Ceylon appears to be a classic case of an enclave surrounded by a traditional society. But Bandarage shows in detail how the pre-colonial socio-economic relations based on subsistence production disintegrated - the regression in production of foodstuff, the penetration of commodity production into the traditional subsistence sector precisely through the production of export goods (p.102 f. ; 184 f.), the emergence of an indigenous capitalist class (p.149 f.) as well as of an indigenous bureaucratic elite attached to the colonial administration who frequently exploited their monopoly of knowledge and their position between the colonial power and the ruled to gain status and accumulate their own capital (p.117 f. ; 125-133; 224 ff.). Thus Bandarage's theoretically guided case study is an outstanding success, both in its selection of material

and its systematic use of it.

On the other hand, Bandarage's other aim of contributing to the theory of underdevelopment must be regarded as a failure. The fault lies in his inadequate theoretical grasp of his own (neo)-Marxist starting-point, resulting in an analysis that barely penetrates the phenomena and seldom scratches the surface of their basic structure.

Two examples will demonstrate this shortcoming.

(1) Bandarage's use of the central materialistic concept of "modes of production" is false and misleading. Thus Kandy's pre-colonial society is characterised as partly "feudal", insofar as tithes were imposed on rice-fields, and as partly "communal", insofar as "highlands" (particularly chena or slash-and-burn agriculture) were exempted from taxation (p.19 f.). In addition to this vague application of feudalism as a specific historical type of society (p.36 f.), Bandarage's primary criterion for differentiating modes of production must also be criticised. This criterion is reduced to the appropriation of surplus, without consideration of the property, possessions, usufructuary rights and specific relations of dependency of the direct producers. (In this way Bandarage can even distinguish between "feudal" and "more feudal" relations (p.44 f.).)

Still more important, a formal economic understanding of modes of production and social structures is operating here. Kandy's economic system is not understood as a functional totality of complementary economic activities the purpose of which is to ensure the society's reproduction. The various activities of one and the same social group in one and the same context of production and reproduction are ascribed to different modes of production. The problem consists in uncoupling the determination of mode of production from the concomitant constitution of social classes. The superficial results to which this reductive concept leads are to be seen in Bandarage's analysis of the colonial class system. Far from being an analysis, it is a mere compilation of the manifest conflicts in a certain period of Ceylonese history (p.306 ff.), without generalisable application to the systematic contradictions and internal developmental dynamic of peripheral capitalistic societies.

(2) Bandarage's contrast of metropolitan and peripheral models of capital accumulation furnishes another example of theoretical superficiality and the consequent failure of abstraction. Since the critical difference between the models is attributed to the differing opportunities of appropriation and disposal of surplus (foreign vs. domestic), any contribution to the theory of development is in principle ruled out. The inadequacy of this criterion is demonstrated by European social history (cf. e.g. the developmental conditions of 19th century Norway). Even Bandarage himself seems to recognise its difficulty in dealing with the contemporary "semiperiphery" (p.4 f.; 278; 287).

Résumé: As a social-historical study of Ceylon, the book is excellent. As a theoretical contribution to the discussion of underdevelopment, it offers little beyond its methodological starting-point.

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