

Modernization Theory And The Cold War

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[**Abstract:** In this article the structural, political and intellectual context in which a specific discourse of development emerged is examined. In the context of the Cold War, the prolonged effort of American intellectuals in advising and attempting to redirect the process of development in India and its consequences for a particular version of modernization theory is analyzed. A general sociology of knowledge approach is deployed to examine the complex configuration of events that contributed to a specific discourse that owes its intellectual lineage to the Comtean vision of social science.]

In recent years a growing number of studies have examined the relationship between power and knowledge, the social organization of knowledge, and the implication of academic disciplines, institutions and intellectuals in the reproduction of domination and hegemony. With varying emphases and quite different agendas, Foucault (1973; 1977; 1980; 1981), Escobar (1994) Said (1978; 1993) Berman (1983), Asad (1973), Viswanathan (1989), Fisher (1980; 1983; 1992), Gendzier (1985), Buxton (1985), Silva and Slaughter (1984), Huaco (1986), Rafael (1994), Lele (1994), Gareau (1990) etc. have attempted to unravel the intricate connections between the production of specific systems of knowledge and the exercise of power in its many forms. More generally, a number of studies in the area of sociology of science have drawn attention to the complex and mediated linkages between natural scientific knowledge and power (Aronowitz, 1988; Brown, 1993). Most if not all of these studies have been inspired by Michel Foucault's general argument about the relationship between power and knowledge. Based on extensive empirical studies, Foucault locates the emergence of specific fields of knowledge like criminology, clinical medicine, psychiatry, the social sciences etc. in the context of the emerging "disciplinary society" with its associated imperatives of power and social control over increasing numbers of people in specific institutional settings like schools, asylums, hospitals, prisons and factories.

In a way, Foucault's approach further refines and extends the scope of Max Weber's understanding of the increasing growth of instrumental rationality as a crucial and perhaps even dominant component of modernity. Some of Foucault's interpreters have deployed his ideas in a manner that tends to purge elements of ambivalence as well as the crucial distinction that Weber (and Karl Mannheim) maintained between formal and substantive

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rationality. Although Foucault himself did not aim to provide a cut and dried formula for analyzing the intricacies of the working of power, some of his more enthusiastic interlocutors tend to engage in a blanket critique of an undifferentiated concept of rationality. This exercise has ironically contributed to a totalizing conception of power that presumably envelops individuals from all sides, constitutes subjects that are little more than "docile bodies" and against which resistance is more or less futile. Overall though, his methodology and general formulation about the intersection of knowledge, power and domination provide a useful corrective to the hegemonic liberal view that conceives of any growth of knowledge as inevitably entailing increasing the enhancement of the sphere of freedom. One need not accept the strong shade of pessimism in Foucault's own formulations, as evident in the famous debate with Noam Chomsky, in order to appreciate the methodological and indeed substantive value of his perspective in making sense of the complexities of the emergence of specific disciplinary knowledges and their intersection with the exercise of power, domination and regulation.

Drawing upon the general analytical insights offered by the some of the writers discussed above, this article seeks to engage in a reflexive examination of some of the conditions of possibility for the emergence of "modernization theory" and its complicity with structures of power and domination. Due to the many excellent theoretical and empirical critiques of modernization theory, any further discussion of it might appear to be superfluous. However, as Irène Gendzier (1985) and Timothy Luke (1991: 272) have argued, while modernization theory may have been all but buried under the broadsides emanating from dependency and world-system theorists, it nevertheless constitutes the dominant world-view of policy-makers and economists in many parts of the world. Thus while modernization theory seems to have virtually disappeared in academic sociological discussions of development, the reverse is quite true when it comes to the assumptions underlying the strategies of major international development institutions, agencies and organizations. Indeed, critiques of most of the theoretical suppositions of modernization theories have barely affected the policy-making and policy-implementing institutions and organizations. Most of these institutions continue to exhibit an inordinate amount of Comtean faith and confidence in the ability of positivistic social science to provide scientific recipes for controlling and managing the trajectories of social change and economic growth on demand in various "developing societies."

In view of the fact that modernization theory continues to permeate the thinking and policy strategies of development experts, a critical and reflexive (Baber 1992) look at the political and structural conditions that contributed to and sustained its emergence may help in understanding its appeal to theorists and practitioners of development policy. This article examines an extended period of engagement between social scientists formally affiliated with MIT, their counterparts in India and Indian society. The aim of this article is to flesh out and unravel the structural and ideological conditions for the

emergence of a specific element of modernization theory. The association of the MIT social scientists with the development process in India constituted a major element in what Arturo Escobar (1985) has called the “development of the discourse of development.” In general, this article provides qualified support for the general arguments of Fisher (1980; 1983; 1992), Gendzier (1985), Escobar (1985), Luke (1991) and Leys (1982). Although the focus of this article is on a specific period and zone of engagement between specific intellectuals and a specific society, the arguments advanced here have broader implications for a general understanding of the genesis and the role of “area study programmes” as well as specific social scientific discourses (Lele, 1994).

The particular episode examined here involves the relationship between the social scientists associated with the MIT Center for International Studies (henceforth MITCIS), the Ford Foundation, the U.S. government and policy makers and their counterparts in India between the early 1950’s and 1970’s. During the two decades of involvement, certain key American social scientists managed to convince the U.S. government that they were in a position to produce what Habermas (1971:309) and C. Wright Mills (1970) have called “instrumental” and “nomological” knowledge respectively. The social scientists associated with the MIT Centre for International Studies had enormous faith in their ability to produce policy relevant knowledge about South Asia. The assumption was that this kind of knowledge could presumably be used by the U.S. administration to direct the process of economic development and social change in accordance with its own strategic, ideological and economic interests. Overall then, this article examines the relationship between social scientists, the emergence of a particular theory of social change and its connections with the larger social, economic and political context.

The Emergence of Development Studies

The genesis of “development studies,” initially as a sub-discipline of economics, and later as a full fledged field, occurred in the aftermath of the Second World War. The concept of “underdevelopment” as a problem did not emerge until around the 1940’s and up until this period there was an almost total absence of systematic theories which attempted to understand and explain the process and trajectory of change from “underdeveloped” to “developed” societies. Of course, a number of Western economists had been interested in the economy and social structure of the colonies, and this is hardly surprising given the long history of colonialism. In the case of India, this interest, particularly of the English economists is evident in the title of Keynes’ very first book: **Indian Currency and Finance**. The work of Eric Stokes (1959), Barber (1975) and Ambirajan (1978), documents in further detail, the interest of the English economists in the Indian economy and society. However, at that time, “development studies” as a formal and systematic sub-discipline had not yet emerged. By 1945 there were a number of universities in England where courses on “colonial economics” were being offered,

but there were no such facilities in the United States. As George Rosen (1985:19-20) pointed out, although several American universities were offering courses on South Asian culture and history, the economy of the region did not figure in the curriculum.

The depression followed by the Second World War served to focus the attention of American economists on issues related to development and underdevelopment. Both these events pointed towards the role of greater governmental intervention to effect substantial changes in the economy. In addition to these factors, the fact that the Soviet Union was quite unaffected by the depression and had emerged as a major industrial power during the same period, did not go unnoticed. In fact it was evident to the American economists that centralized planning had played a key role in the growth of the industrial base in the Soviet Union. Such an awareness prodded American economists and other social scientists to seriously consider planning as a possibility for effecting economic growth in nations identified as having a low industrial base and therefore, "underdeveloped." Finally, the conception and eventual execution of the Marshall Plan in Europe after the war had imbued economists with a strong dose of confidence in the feasibility of re-developing battered economies with the help of investment related policies combined with the tools of economic planning. The overall effect of the depression, the war and a fair measure of success in the execution of the Marshall Plan was to provide American economists with the unwarranted confidence in their ability to understand, explain and control the trajectory of social change at the macro level (Rosen, 1985:26-27). To invoke Habermas' typology of three different forms of knowledge, the economists came to acquire a high degree of faith in their ability to produce "instrumental knowledge" which could presumably help in predicting and controlling the process of social change along pre-determined trajectories (Habermas 1971:309).

The Focus on South Asia: Social Scientists, the State and the Ford Foundation

In addition to the depression, the war, and the early success of the Marshall Plan, another key development made South Asia the centre of attraction for some social scientists, the U.S. government, as well as the Ford Foundation. This was the Chinese Revolution of 1949. The Chinese revolution, together with the gradual onset of the Cold War provided a convergence of focus on South Asia, especially on India. In many quarters of the U.S. administration and the Ford Foundation, the general sentiment was that the Chinese Revolution of 1949 signified a major "loss" for American interests. Most of them were convinced that unless some actions were taken, there was a high probability of India following the Chinese example (Rosen, 1985:3-6). A number of steps for stalling such a development were explored and discussed.

In early 1951, Paul Hoffman, the first president of the highly expanded and newly reconstituted Ford Foundation paid a visit to India to explore the possibility of providing aid for "developmental" purposes. Hoffman, who had most recently been the administrator of the Marshall Plan also wrote to his friend Chester Bowles (who was to

become the U.S. ambassador to India) recounting the missed opportunity for providing such aid to China and its implication for India. Invoking the telling metaphors of disease and immunization against it, he wrote:

...if in 1945 we had embarked on such a program (Rural Reconstruction Program in Formosa) and carried it on at a cost of not over two hundred million dollars a year, the end result would have been a China completely immunized against the appeal of the Communists. India, in my opinion, is today what China was in 1945 (cited in Rosen, 1985:11).

On his part, Chester Bowles, echoing the “domino theory” of the spread of communism, recounted that he was eventually persuaded to take up the position of the U.S. ambassador to India because,

If we lose India, as we have lost China, we shall certainly lose Southeast Asia with the repercussions running all the way through Africa. It is difficult under such circumstances to see how Japan could be held in line, and it would not be too long before we would find ourselves driven back into a “citadel” (cited in Rosen, 1985:11).

After spending some time in India as the U.S. ambassador, Chester Bowles wrote to his friend Paul Hoffman of the Ford Foundation of his apprehension that:

...the critical danger as I see it lies in the possibility that economic conditions may improve in China while the Indian situation remains stagnant....if such a contrast developed during the next four or five years...the growth of Communism in India might be great...another potentially strong Communist nation might be born...it is absolutely essential that the objectives of (the first Five Year Plan) should be attained....this will provide the essential strengthening of the Indian economy, and at the same time harden the Indian attitude towards the Communist threat (cited in Rosen 1985: 15).

At about the same time, South Asia was emerging as an area of interest for economists and other social scientists in the United States and for roughly the same reasons that had attracted the attention of the U.S. administration and the Ford Foundation. Confident from their recent success with the Marshall Plan, these economists and social scientists were eager to actively plan and direct the process of “development” in South Asia in order to, as Hoffman invoking the metaphor of disease and preventive medicine put it, “immunize” it from the appeals of communism.

A number of social scientists who were keen to offer their expertise for formulating policies and strategies to immunize South Asia from the specter of communism came together under the newly constituted Center for International Studies at MIT. Set up in 1951 with the economist Walt Whitman Rostow as its key figure, the center was conceived as part of a larger MIT effort to direct its research effort “toward problems affecting the national welfare [of the United States] in the current period of crisis” (Rosen 1985:27). Although the MITCIS had already begun classified research on communist societies for the U.S. government, it also began actively exploring the possibilities of securing finances from private foundations for its proposed research on the theme of economic development and political stability in the developing areas. In the initial exchange between the MITCIS and the Ford Foundation - which was identified as a likely source of funds - the social scientists made it clear that “the ultimate aim of (all the non-technical research)...will be the production of an alternative to Marxism”

(Rosen-1985:28).

In 1952, the economist Max Millikan quit his job as the Director of Economic Research for the CIA and took up the newly created position of the Director of the MITCIS. In one of the first formal proposals for funding to the Ford Foundation, Millikan defined the Center's research program as "the application of basic social science research to problems of U.S. policy in the current world struggle" (Rosen 1985:29). The same proposal identified the connection between economic development and political stability as the key area of research MITCIS would focus on. After a brief technical discussion of some issues relating to economic development, the specific ideological assumptions underpinning the goals of the MITCIS were clearly spelled out by Millikan. As he put it:

...the stable evolution of national societies towards effective democracy is probably essential to the establishment and maintenance of a world environment which will permit American society to evolve over the long run within the framework of its traditional principles and institutions... Economic development of the free nations...is obviously a prime determinant of their political stability. It is a determinant, moreover, on which U.S. policy and action has a major impact. It is, therefore, important for us to know as much as possible about the factors which limit and those which encourage such development (Rosen 1985:30).

In the same proposal for funds, Millikan made it clear that the center's research would be policy oriented. He pointed out that in the first instance the Center would focus on "basic intellectual problems which really require the resources of a university for their solution." However he was quick to specify the general orientation of the new institution by asserting that "we should undertake no research that does not...grow out of the necessity to know something in order to be able to do something [about it]...." (Rosen 1985:30).

In this proposal, Millikan also indicated the MIT center's plans to supplement the studies conducted by economists with other forms of knowledge gained by the various disciplines of the social sciences. He hoped that the services of anthropologists and sociologists could be relied upon to conduct field studies of the village or the "microcosm." In a later correspondence with the Ford Foundation, Millikan wrote that research at the center would aim to identify the "strategic factors" that determined a country's achievement. Elaborating further on this point, he noted "By a strategic factor - (cultural, institutional, ideological, or administrative) - we mean both one that has an important effect in causing political and economic changes and one that can be influenced by the conscious policies of the governments of the countries, of the American government, of private organizations, or of international agencies" (Rosen 1985:32). Once again, the importance of India for American policy was emphasised; and more so in view of the former's close relations with the Soviet Union. Finally, Millikan underscored the importance of presenting the results of the research conducted by MITCIS in such a way so as to create public support in the United States for "desirable American policies" (Rosen, 1985:32).

It should be evident that Max Millikan, a prominent academic economist and the

then head of the MITCIS, was quite clear about his ideological position in the prevailing international context. He was also rather confident about the role and efficacy of social scientific knowledge in assisting the U.S. government, policy-makers as well as private foundations in pursuing their interests. Finally, he was quite aware of the high degree of congruence of views between the intellectuals associated with the MITCIS, the government, policy-makers and Ford Foundation. The ideological context in which a strand of development and modernization theory emerged can be gauged by the comments made by Walt W. Rostow quite a few decades after the setting up of the center at MIT. In a 1982 lecture, Rostow recalled the role of the Korean War in convincing Millikan and himself:

...that the struggle to deter and contain the thrust for expanded communist power would be long; and that new concepts would be required to underpin U.S. foreign policy in the generation ahead, quite aside from the task of dealing directly with the communist world. We believed that a portion of academic talent should be devoted to generating these concepts. (emphasis added; cited in Rostow, 1985:12).

By the sixties, some of Rostow's now famous (or infamous) concepts - "take off" "self-sustained growth" - had become part of the standard repertoire of developmental economists and modernization theorists.

Social Scientists and the U.S. Government

The interest in South Asia was not limited to the Ford Foundation and social scientists at MIT. As mentioned earlier, the U.S. administration was also a key player in the attempt to develop immunity of a particular kind in India. In 1958, John F. Kennedy, then a senator from Massachusetts, together with John Sherman Cooper, a Republican and former U.S. ambassador to India, introduced a resolution to the Senate. The Kennedy-Cooper Resolution, as it came to be known, read:

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that the Congress recognizes the importance of the economic development of the Republic of India to its people, to democratic values and institutions, and to peace and stability in the world. Consequently, it is the sense of the Congress that it is in the interest of the United States to join with other nations in providing support of the type, magnitude, and duration, adequate to assist India to complete successfully its current program for economic development (US Congressional Record, 1958:4678).

The resolution was moved together with speeches from both Cooper and Kennedy. Kennedy's speech pleaded strongly for foreign aid for India's Five Year Plans, despite the fact that the Indian government had consistently been extremely critical of American foreign policy. Kennedy argued that the first Five Year Plan in India (1951-56) had demonstrated a capacity for progress and went on to emphasise that its performance relative to that of China would have great political and ideological significance in the developing regions. And since the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) appeared to be headed for failure due to shortage of foreign exchange, Kennedy urged the Congress for increased external assistance to India. Like Paul Hoffman of the Ford Foundation,

Kennedy cited the success of the Marshall Plan in bringing about the reconstruction of Western Europe. He also attempted to address the fears of those senators who were critical of aid to a country which had close ties with the Soviet Union, had an official policy of "neutrality," and which continued to be very critical of the U.S. foreign policy. Kennedy urged fellow members of the congress not to be

...confused by talk of Indian neutrality...our nation also during the period of its formative growth adopted a policy of non-involvement in the great international controversies of the 19th century....Nothing serves the ultimate interests of all of the West better than the opportunity for the emergent uncommitted nations of the world to absorb their primary energies now in programs of real economic improvement.... This is the only basis on which Asian and African nations can find the political balance and social stability which provide the true defense against communist penetration (US Congressional Record, 1958:4679).

In the same speech, Kennedy also deflected criticism against providing foreign aid to a country that had embarked on five-year plans on the Soviet Model and was spending more on public as opposed to private sector enterprises. His argument was that:

There is every reason to believe that future private investment in India will expand with the rise of Government assistance.... Mr. G.D. Birla and Mr. J.R.D. Tata, perhaps the foremost exponents of private enterprise along western lines in India, have made it perfectly clear that the success of India's 5-year plan is essential if there is to be a sizeable increase in private investment.... There are certain types of investments in underdeveloped countries - education, health, transport, fuel, and power - which private capital cannot underwrite. Yet they are essential to the creation of a setting in which efficient profitable private operations can grow (US Congressional Record, 1958: 4678).

And finally, Kennedy specifically cited Walt Rostow's testimony (and used his signature concept of economic take-off) to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to argue that:

...India has passed the point of economic take-off and is launched upon an effort which will by the end of the century make her one of the big powers of the world.... India today represents as great a hope, as commanding a challenge as Western Europe did in 1947... (US Congressional Record, 1958:4678).

The Kennedy-Cooper Resolution was supported by a coalition of Democrats and Liberal Republicans in the Senate, but it was rejected in the House of Representatives. In early 1959, Kennedy and Cooper tabled a revised concurrent resolution to the Senate and on this occasion too, Kennedy's speech reiterated his earlier concerns. He emphasized that:

...to nations in a hurry to emerge from the rut of development, Communist China offers a potential model. 1949 was their "round.".. But 1959 could and should be our "round," our year... if we act now, on the right scale, in the right way, we may reverse the ever-widening gap - we may diminish the threat of a Communist takeover, and increase the chances of a peaceful evolution in India and other uncommitted, less developed areas (Kennedy cited in Rostow 1985: 158).

The proposed concurrent Kennedy-Cooper Resolution read as follows:

Whereas the continued vitality and success of the Republic of India is a matter of common free world interest, politically because of her four hundred million people and vast land area; strategically because of her commanding geographic location; economically because of her

organized national development effort; and morally because of their heartening commitment to the goals, values and institutions of democracy: Now, therefore, be it Resolved by the Senate (The House of Representatives concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that the United States Government should invite other friendly and democratic nations to join in a mission to consult with India on the detailed possibilities for joint action to assure the fulfilment of India's second five-year plan and the effective design of its third plan. And that the secretary of state report to the Congress on the possibility of such a mission after consultation with interested governments and with the Republic of India (cited in Rostow 1985: 158-59).

As Walt Rostow (1985:161) points out, much of the Kennedy-Cooper Resolution was prepared in direct consultation with the economists at the MITCIS. After the concurrent resolution was tabled, the State Department raised some objections. One of these was the fact that Pakistan had been excluded from the resolution (Rostow 1985: 161). Kennedy and Cooper agreed to make some changes in the resolution and a revised version was presented to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on July 14th, 1959. The U.S. administration expressed cautious support, characterising the revised resolution as a "purely exploratory measure and a useful one" (Rostow 1985:162). In September 1959, the final drafting of the resolution was prepared with the help of Max Millikan, Paul Rosenstein Rosen (a British economist associated with the MITCIS), I.G. Patel (Indian economist, and until recently the director of the London School of Economics), Morarji Desai (the then Minister of Finance in the Indian government), B.K. Nehru (the then Indian ambassador to the U.S.) and Walt Rostow. Finally on September 10th 1959, the amended resolution, substituting India with South Asia, was accepted without dissent in the Senate.

A Blue-Print for Social Change - Social Scientists and "Developing Areas"

So far I have discussed the views of the key officials of the Ford Foundation as well as some members of the U.S. administration about the changing international context and how they saw their role in encouraging a particular pattern of economic and political development in the developing areas. In this section, the focus will be on elaborating the view of the MITCIS as an institution. A couple of key documents put out by the centre will be examined and this will be followed by an evaluation of the degree of convergence of interests and views of these intellectuals, the U.S. government and the Ford Foundation.

The first of these documents is a report originally prepared for a foreign policy conference at Princeton University in 1954. The letter of invitation sent out to the select participants at the proposed Princeton conference set the agenda in the following words:

What the United States needs, in the development of its foreign policy, in its successful counter to Soviet expansion, in its determination to roll back communism by a peaceful means, is a bold, imaginative plan...a group of the best people we can find should sit down for a weekend to consider the broad shape such a synthesis should take...if a World Economic Plan contains those ingredients which will be unmistakably add to the welfare and prosperity of this country and of the free world, the fact that the grass is indeed greener on freedom's side of the fence

will cease to be merely an American statement, and become a reality (Jackson cited in Rostow, 1985:245-249)

Among the select nineteen individuals invited to the Princeton conference were Edward Mason of Harvard, Max Millikan, Director of the MITCIS, George Baldwin and Walt Rostow of MITCIS, Allen W. Dulles, Director of the C.I.A., Lloyd Berkner, President, Associated Universities Inc., Abbot Washburn of the U.S. Information Agency, Thomas McKittrick of Chase National Bank, and Robert Garner, Vice-President, International Bank among others (Rostow 1985:250-251).

At the Princeton conference Rostow and Millikan were asked to put together a paper outlining the linkages between the promotion of economic growth abroad and U.S. foreign policy. This report was further expanded with the help of other social scientists like Everett Hagen, Francis Bator, George Baldwin, Harold Issacs and Ithiel Pool and was eventually published in 1957 as **A Proposal: Key to an Effective Foreign Policy**. This report quickly became an important foreign policy document and was drawn upon by the U.S. administration for a number of years. Based on the accumulated knowledge of different developing areas studied by social scientists attached to the MITCIS, the thesis of the report was that a much expanded long-term program of American participation in the economic development of the underdeveloped areas can and should be one of the most important means for furthering the purposes of American foreign policy (Millikan and Rostow 1957:1). It was envisaged that this program could be an effective instrument for achieving two crucial goals:

(1) increasing the awareness elsewhere in the world that the goals, aspirations, and values of the American people are in large part the same as those of peoples in other countries; and (2) developing viable energetic, and confident societies through the Free World. We believe, therefore, that such a program could be a principal and effective instrument in our efforts to produce political, social, and psychological results in the national interest (Millikan and Rostow 1957:2)

The authors of the proposal also cautioned that the program espoused by them would require U.S. government expenditure which would be somewhat larger than the current spending for economic aid. However, this extra expense was justified by the argument that:

...the amount of additional money needed would be small compared with what we shall have to spend in emergency efforts either to salvage situations which have been permitted to degenerate, such as South Korea and Indo-China, or to put out additional brush-fires if they got started. The total costs of such a program would be insignificant compared with the costs of waging limited wars (Millikan and Rostow, 1957:2)

Overall then, Millikan and Rostow's **Proposal** promised to be cost-effective in promoting the development of "underdeveloped" areas according to the perceived interests of the United States. While it is impossible to go into all the details of the book, it is significant to note that Chapter Six titled **The Stages of Growth** constituted the rough draft of Rostow's **The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto** (1960). Overall, Millikan and Rostow's **Proposal** identified the problems of

U.S. foreign policy, the areas of study on which social scientists should focus, the institutions required to implement the blueprint for action and finally an assessment of the levels of expenditure required to put the program in action.

The other key document which enables us to get some understanding of the worldview of the key intellectuals associated with the MITCIS, is Max Millikan and Donald Blackmer's edited book, **The Emerging Nations: Their Growth and United States Policy**. Published in 1961 under the auspices of the MITCIS on a request from the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, the book offers interesting insights about the assumptions and expectations of the social scientists regarding the patterns of development in the "developing" societies. It also enables one to get some ideas about the degree of rather Comtean confidence these social scientists had about their ability to control and direct the direction and scale of social change in the developing areas of the world. The authors of the book argue that the United States and other developed nations "must declare their hope of influencing the course of evolution of other nations with the consent and active participation of those nations themselves" (Millikan and Blackmer 1961:132). Among other means and mechanisms, the authors suggest the need for "new apparatus and personnel and an unprecedented and skilfully co-ordinated use of the instruments of economic, military, and information policy" (Millikan and Blackmer, 1961:133).

In this book, the authors also attempt to chart out the process of evolution of "underdeveloped" societies from their "traditional" stages towards "modernity." They note that this transition from "traditional" to "modern" societies may go awry at times or the resulting strains and lack of fulfilment of rising expectations may cause them to succumb to the "appeal of communism" (Millikan and Blackmer 1961:102-104). However, the overall teleological evolutionary goal of "modernization" is never questioned and the role of social scientists in both producing knowledge and directing the development of societies is outlined in the following manner:

...modernization is a dynamic process occurring through the interaction of the economic, political, social, and psychological forces in a society. Clearly, policy designed to have the maximum constructive influence on the course of modernization should coordinate every instrument of international policy...This is the time to help establish a wide variety of data-collecting and statistical-reporting procedures - surveys and projections of manpower, education, health, agricultural conditions, and resource availabilities...They can be designed to serve a double purpose: to provide essential information to the new governments and to put us in touch with a larger number of elements of the indigenous society. They will be crucial to more ambitious development efforts later (Millikan and Blackmer, 1961:136).

In the passage quoted above, the relationship between power and knowledge, or to use Michel Foucault's term, power-knowledge, should be evident. The above passage also clearly indicates that the authors of the book conceived of social science capable of producing what C. Wright Mills (1970) and Habermas (1971) have labelled "nomological" and "rational instrumental" respectively.

It is clear that the development of the discourse of development can be located in a particular social, economic and political context. More specifically, the social scientists associated with MITCIS focused on the "developing areas" for a number of reasons. These ranged from a direct and self-conscious effort to produce knowledge which could be of use for the policy-makers within the U.S. government, to the creation of what Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) have termed "cultural capital," or what Ben Agger (1991: xi) has called "career capital." Although not all the rank and file social scientists associated with the MITCIS might have been self-consciously engaged in the process of reproducing the hegemony of the United States vis-a-vis the "developing areas," their research invariably led to the production of knowledge which policy-makers within the U.S. government believed could be used to direct the process of social change in these areas.

The key intellectuals involved in the setting up of the centre had a specific conception of their role as intellectuals, the nature of social scientific knowledge and possessed a tremendous amount of confidence in the utility of this knowledge in influencing the course of social change in South Asia. Thus, social scientists like Max Millikan, Rostow, Everett Hagen, and Lucien Pye among others, actively sought to engage the U.S. government and the Ford Foundation with the MITCIS in order to co-ordinate the production of knowledge which they believed was necessary for U.S. interests and the perpetuation of global capitalism.

Conclusions

In this article, an attempt has been made to locate the emergence of "development studies" in general and "modernization theory" in particular in the larger social and historical context. While "modernization theory" has been criticized many times over, usually on logical, methodological or empirical grounds, the focus of this particular article has been different from such critiques. Thus, instead of subjecting "modernization theory" to methodological or empirical scrutiny, I have, following the lead of Foucault, attempted to investigate the conditions responsible for its emergence. One particular case has been examined to lend further support to the arguments of other scholars like Irene Gendzier, Timothy Luke and Arturo Escobar that a specific discourse of modernization and development emerged in the context of the Cold War and the perceived needs of the U.S. government to combat the spread of communism. It was in this context that a group of eminent social scientists were able to convince some key actors within the U.S. government and the Ford Foundation about their ability to produce knowledge and theories which could be put into practice in directing the development of certain countries such that it would not be incompatible with what was perceived to be the interests of "developed" nations. Although it is not claimed that the factors discussed above can provide an exhaustive explanation regarding the emergence and development of

modernization theory, there seems to be little doubt that this particular case constituted one episode of a larger process. However, although elements of modernization theory continue to inform the practice of most agencies engaged in “development” projects, most of their actions seem to be based on an undemonstrated and unwarranted assumption of their ability to completely control and direct the process of social change in the developing areas. Consequently, while Foucault’s writings are helpful in making sense of the emergence of the discourse of modernization and development studies, discourses may not always be as powerful and “developing and underdeveloped” societies may not quite be the “docile bodies” that some of his more enthusiastic and uncritical followers seem to believe. Such an uncritical acceptance of “developing societies” as passive “docile bodies” comes out clearly in Timothy Luke’s conclusion that:

For a “non-modern, non-developed, nonmetropolitan, noncore society, the processes of “modernization” or “development” unfold as normalization and through surveillance and quiet coercion...These modern truths invalidate or subjugate the indigenous knowledges of local culture, time and technology.... Acting under the directive discourse of development and within the disciplinary grids of the world economy, the national leaders of LDCs can only retrace the discursive leads of power/knowledge in imitative enactments of normalization, which prevent their peoples from becoming the individual subjects they might have been or from retaining the traditional subjectivity they have by inducing them to become normalized global subjects they actually are not (Luke, 1991:292).

Although Luke addresses the issue from quite a different political spectrum, his argument displays the same unwarranted belief in the powers of discourse of modernization as exhibited by Walt Rostow and others associated with the MITCIS. Luke’s conclusions further reproduces a theoretically and politically naive image of the “national leaders of LDCs” who cannot but “retrace the discursive leads of power/knowledge in imitative enactments of normalization.” As Wole Soyinka (1991) has argued in the context of Africa, the reality of the ravages of colonialism and imperialism notwithstanding, such reasoning, coupled with populist rhetoric has been constantly appropriated by some “nationalist” leaders and intellectuals of LDCs to legitimize many oppressive policies and practices at home. In the context of India, many intellectuals find it more comforting to point out the colonialist roots of almost all social problems without reflecting on the complexities of the role of contemporary agents and evolving social structures (Baber 1998). As Aijaz Ahmad (1992:196-7) has accurately and acutely observed, “colonialism is now being blamed not only for its own cruelties, but conveniently enough for ours too.” Although Luke’s arguments are presented as a critique of the discourse of development, he seems to invest too much faith in the powers of positivistic social science to control the social world. And he seems to have too little faith in the resilience of cultural constructs like “traditional subjectivities” and “traditional knowledges” which in any case hardly ever existed in their pristine, static forms. Finally, he has ignored the unintended consequences of the application of the “discipline of modernity” to the developing societies. One should therefore be cautious against

reading too much instrumentalism in the production of knowledge for the purposes of exercising power over and controlling the process of social change in "developing" societies. While there is no doubt that some intellectuals like Rostow and Millikan were consciously manipulating and hoping to direct the process of social change of South Asia in a particular direction, other social scientists saw the MIT's India Project as nothing more than a good opportunity to accumulate "career capital." In the final analysis, Rostow and Millikan's endeavour seems to have been rooted in an unwarranted confidence and belief in Auguste Comte's positivist slogan: "Savoir pour prévoir, et prévoir pour pouvoir."

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