



TECHNIUM
SOCIAL SCIENCES JOURNAL

Vol. 25, 2021

**A new decade
for social changes**

www.techniumscience.com

ISSN 2668-7798



9 772668 779000

Role of the State in Modernization and Development in Post-Colonial Sri Lanka. Conceptual perspectives

Sarath Vitharana¹, Chaminda Abeysinghe²

¹Department of Sociology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, ²Department of International Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

svitharana@kln.ac.lk¹, cabeysinghe@kln.ac.lk²

Abstract. The modernization and development of the post-colonial countries were associated with external and internal factors. Many argue that socio-economic, political, and constitutional reforms introduced by colonial masters during their rule have phenomenally contributed to the initiation of the modernization and development process by bringing liberal political-economic and governance reforms into the prevailed feudalist system. Moreover, even after the independence, the state apparatus designed and formed under the context of colonial inheritance became a pivotal actor for determining modernization and development of the country. Thus this study examined the role of the Sri Lankan state in the modernization and development process in the post-colonial countries era. The study adopted secondary data and content analysis as a method of data collection. The study found that the state has played a significant role in modernization and socio-economic development in post-colonial developing countries. This study reveals that the states' capacity and capability in the modernization and development process have diminished since the 1960s due to the lack of economic development performances in respective countries. Apart from that, economic reforms such as the neo-liberal economic reforms, which encourage the minimal-state policies introduced by the United National Party's regime in 1977, also have caused the decline of state intervention in the Sri Lankan context. However, the public's general view is that the state should further perform its duties and responsibilities vested with socio-economic development and modernization processes in these post-colonial countries.

Keywords. Modernization, Development, Role of the state in modernization and development, Post-colonial state, Sri Lanka

1 Introduction

The relationship between social change and politics is essential. As pointed out by Anthony Giddens, "We can, however, identify the three main factors that have consistently influenced social change: the environment, political organization, and cultural factors. Though the influence of political fact for social change in hunting and gathering societies were minimum since there are no political authorities capable of mobilizing the community, in all other types of society, political agencies strongly affect the course of development a society takes" (2000: 522-23). In general, Politics is defined as "the process within a STATE concerned with influencing the content and implementation of the goals, policies, etc., it pursues, its *government*" (*Collins Dictionary of Sociology*, 2006: 470; capital letters and italics are original). In that sense, the state – or apparatus of government's role in the society is crucial. However,

In contrast to the pre-colonial state, when the modern state was being established, it etched itself into the imagination of political leaders and masses on social practices, moral judgments, and imaginative possibilities in a way that no previous political institutions had ever done (Khilnani, 1998: 41). In this context, the state (including the apparatus of government and political parties) of post-colonial countries “has subsequently given rise to a narrow concept of it as a policy-making actor, frequently identified in the literature with ‘the public interest.’ This is indeed a compelling view of the state in much discourse about ‘development,’ which appeals to a notion of a benevolent Leviathan chartered to bring about growth or to eliminate poverty” (Fuller and Harries, 2000: 3), and necessary social infrastructure and service facilities. In this context, this article discusses the role of the state and its government apparatus in development and modernization in modern society regarding the post-colonial Third World. The first part of the article is dedicated to the centrality of the state in contemporary society, briefly considering its emergence and influence on the European world’s more significant socio-economic changes. The second and lengthy part of this article considers the importance of the state in development, modernization, and social change in post-colonial countries since the 1940s. The third part of this article considers the state’s role in modernization and development in post-colonial Sri Lanka in the context of transnational phenomena of globalization since the late 1970s.

1.2 Objectives of the study

The study’s main objective is to examine the state’s role in the modernization and development process in the post-colonial era in Sri Lanka. Moreover, it is expected to identify the concept of modernization and development, especially concerning meaning.

1.3 Research questions

The questions of the study include;

1. What are the concepts of modernization and development?
2. How has the modernization and development process been evolving during pre and post-colonial eras?
3. What are the consequences of the state’s intervention on the modernization and development process in post-colonial Sri Lanka?

1.4 Research Methodology

This study is qualitative. The secondary method of data collection was adopted. Electronic and print materials like textbooks, journal articles, newsletters, bulletins, newspapers, diaries, magazines, workshops, conferences, and seminars papers were utilized in sourcing data for the study. Archives of libraries in Universities and research centers across Sri Lanka as well as internet facilities were also used in sourcing data for the study. The content analysis was adopted in the study.

2 Literature review

2.1. The state in modern societies

The state in modern societies has been highly significant for everyday life in all spheres. As pointed out by David Held, “The state – or apparatus of ‘government’ – appears to be everywhere, regulating the conditions of our lives from birth registration to death certification” (1989: 1). Especially in the Third World countries, the state and the government are significantly engaged with the economy, administration, health care, education, and other crucial areas (Basu, 2005). Thus, Daniel Chirot (1977) defines the state as a social system with rules enforced by a permanent administrative body (the government apparatus). This body is

the highest source of authority in the broader social system. Accordingly, it has the capacity of decision-making followed by translating them into realistic plans and effective implementation.

Here, recalling Max Weber's famous formulation on the criteria for mapping a political organization as a state. Weber points out;

“A ‘ruling organization’ will be called ‘political’ insofar as its existence and order is continuously safeguarded within a given territorial area by the threat and application of physical force on the part of the administrative staff. A compulsory political organization with continuous operations (*politischer Anstaltstrieb*) will be called a ‘state’ in so far as its administrative staff successfully upholds the claim to the *monopoly* of the *legitimate* use of physical force in the enforcement of its order” (1978: 54; emphasis in original).

In this context, it is clear that the state claims the right to make collective decisions and enforce them. Foucault (2006 [1991]) notices this as a form of ‘governmentalizin’ of the state in which the state creates charters for interventions. In his words,

the state, no more probably today than at any other time in its history, does not have this unity, this individuality, this rigorous functionality, nor, to speak frankly, this importance; maybe, after all, the state is no more than a composite reality and a mythicized abstraction, whose importance is a lot more limited than many of us think. Maybe what is important for our modernity – that is, for our present – is not so much the *étatisation* of society, as the ‘governmentalizin’ of the state (Foucault, 2006 [1991]: 142; emphasis in original).¹

Therefore, one can hardly ignore the all-pervading influence of the state on the real-life of contemporary societies. Further, it is hard to think of the sophisticated economic and social network of present-day communities without considering the role of the state or government. Even from a long perspective of history, the state's role and its government apparatus have been the foundation of successful modernization and development. It has taken over more and more of the economic and social functions of civil society.

The modern state has emerged, at first, in Western Europe between the seventeenth and eighteenth century and took a precise shape in the nineteenth century. However, until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the state's role in economic development was relatively restricted. Nevertheless, the role of the state and government in providing physical infrastructure development was critical for its success in early-developed countries (Szirmai, 2005: 462; Chang 2003: 92). As a result of the technological innovations, the required scale of investment in physical infrastructure has become more prominent. Consequently, it became a more risky and challenging effort for private enterprises that look forward to mobilizing their capital investment in infrastructural development. Therefore, governments in countries like Germany, Russia, and France had played a crucial role, sometimes with the participation of private institutions, for the investment in infrastructure development, and consequently, these state investments paved the way for greater social-economic changes of these countries (Szirmai, 2005; Supple, 1989, Weber, 1977). Further, during the Meiji restoration in Japan in the late nineteenth century, the government had played a decisive role in industrialization and agricultural development (Gibney, 1998).

The state and its apparatus of government, its economic and social functions on the civil society have become crucial in the early part of the twentieth century. There were two crucial pieces of evidence for it. First, with the emergence and consolidation of the socialist state in Russia, the state's role in social and economic development turned to new directions. Under the

¹ In his preface to *African Political System* (1940), Radcliffe-Brown argued that the idea of the state should be eliminated from social analysis. He believed that it had only created mystification, and argued that concepts of government and politics were all that are needed for an adequate grasp of the ‘political’ (quoted from Abrams, 2006[1988]: 122).

strong forms of state central planning process, socialist state in Russia intervened in the whole social, economic functions of the society. The second was the Keynesian economic policy for the 'Great Depression of the 1930s. With the introduction of Keynesian economic policy, the argument of the state's 'laissez-faire' policy which was acknowledged by the liberal economic policy, was changed (Chang, 2003; Gabriel, 1991). These two occurrences have significantly affected the changes of the state's role since the early decades of the twentieth century.

Consequently, the interventionist function of state and government in economic development, provision of infrastructure, welfare facilities, especially under the planning matrix, expanded. With the experience of institutionalizing national financial planning to promote growth in European countries after World War II, the role of the state and government for economic and social development was firmly instituted (Edelman and Haugerud, 2005: 6). This situation was further aggravated by establishing the idea of a welfare state, particularly in the 1940s that referred to the state's social policies such as health, education, housing, and other social services. The next most essential point in this regard came out during the same period. After World War II, many Asian and African countries gained political independence from the colonial masters under their decolonization policies. After their political independence, all these countries aimed to achieve development and modernization rapidly. In that context, the role of the state and the functions of the government were very significant and critical.

3Significance of the state for development, modernization and social change in post-colonial countries

The formation of the modern state in most developing countries has been closely associated with the decolonization from the Western colonial legacy since 1945. Since their formation, states and government apparatus intended to follow the interventionist policies for economic and social development and modernization of their societies. There were many reasons for this situation.

Before independence, these countries were labeled as 'backward' countries with 'backward' people. Upon gaining independence, mainly since the mid-1940s, these countries were defined as 'developing,' 'less developed,' 'underdeveloped,' 'Third World,' 'post-colonial countries, and so on. These terms denote the gap between these countries and modernized Western and North American countries and express some socio-political ideologies. In that sense, the term 'developing' implied an ongoing closing of the economic gap between these two countries. Again, the term 'less developed' referred to the gap between the two groups of the countries. The term 'underdeveloped' denoted the social and economic features of these countries. 'Third World' was the term for characteristic differences in the political system along with economic disparity. The term 'post-colonial refers to the historical process which these countries faced.

According to the above categorization, it is evident that these countries' economic conditions and living conditions were comparatively poorer than the developed advanced countries. Apart from those economic conditions, certain social features of these countries were also common after independence. Limited industrial developments characterized these countries. The working classes were small because of the low level of development of the productive forces. On the other hand, a large agricultural sector with peasants who worked their small plots of lands under subsistence level existed with landless peasants. Production technology was traditional. Social infrastructures such as health care and education were poor. The overall mortality rate, infant mortality rate, life expectancy indicated this (Todaro, 2012;

Berberoglu, 1992). By and large, these countries were in a traditional as well as a backward position.

According to much of the writings concerned the underdevelopment of post-colonial less-developed countries, most of the characteristics mentioned earlier resulted from historical processes of exploitation and plunder of Third world societies by European colonialism and imperialism (Griffin, 1973). During the colonial period, colonial governments were primarily concerned with law and order, maintaining stable conditions for trade and agriculture, and mineral exploitations from these countries. These countries were exploited as resource-generating centers for the West's industrial products and markets for western industrial products (Basu: 2005: 107; Midgley, 1987: 119). Therefore, in the anti-colonial movement in Asia and Africa, nationalist leaders criticized colonialism as an exploitative force that created and perpetuated a 'backward' economy and society in their countries. Hence, the primary objective of anti-colonial movements in these countries was to replace the colonial rule with self-government to develop the so-called backward economy and society of these countries.²

When many Asian and African countries gained independence from colonization, their socio-economic conditions were as mentioned above. "Decolonization released new hopes and energies in the new nations and, indeed, across the globe, at a time when boundless faith was being invested in the idea of material progress based on rational-scientific technologies" (Deshpande, 2004: 173). However, these countries faced a specific situation during which many critical issues had to be addressed. These considerations strongly influenced the state and government of these countries to play an active role in achieving social and economic progress after their independence. What were these situations? In the first place, there was a shortage of capital in these countries for sufficient investment in the industrial sector. As a result that, the local entrepreneurial class was slightly developed. Thus, the state and governments of respective countries had to fill the deficiency of service provisions by playing an investor role in their respective contexts. Moreover, as mentioned above, there was evidence of the lack of infrastructure facilities such as roads, power and energy, education, and health care. The development of these social and economic infrastructure services also required substantial state involvement. Further, after independence, these countries sought accelerated development policy to narrow down the gap between rich and developing countries under the central planning process. This also called for a more active state role (Szirmai, 2005; Myrdal, 1968; Eckstein, 1958). On the whole, the stress was on planned state intervention for modernization and development in Third World.

National development planning under direct state intervention is a product of the early twentieth century. As it was mentioned above, two distinct planning traditions could be seen that time; the first was with the establishment of socialist Russia in 1917, and the second was the result of efforts in the western capitalist nations to address the repercussions of the Economic Depression of 1932-33 under the Keynesian economic policies. Both traditions arose from social, economic, and political crises, although they sought remedies in different economic interventions. For the Soviet Union, the main objective was to restructure the social relations of

² In his widely quoted book, *'Imagined Communities'* (1983), Benedict Anderson says that the set of modular forms which the nationalist elites in Asia and Africa had chosen during freedom struggle was a modular supplied by the historical experience of nationalism of Western Europe. However, Partha Chatterjee rejects the idea that Asian and African nationalism is a Western modular of nationalist imagination. He argues that the nationalist imagination in Asia and Africa is posited not on an identity but rather on a difference with the modular forms of the national society propagated by the modern West. Considering Indian experience, he points out that anti-colonial nationalism in India created its own domains of social, cultural, and economic sovereignty within colonial society itself well before it began its political struggle with colonial power (1994 [1993]: 5-6).

production. The Western nations tried to control markets, move towards full employment, and thence to equilibrium (Chang, 2003; Gabriel, 1991). The Marshall Plan (European recovery plan) also assumed the state role in economic development under the planning matrix in the immediate postwar period. As Myrdal argued,

The basic principle in the ideology of economic planning is that the state shall take an active; indeed the decisive, role in the economy: by its own acts of investment and enterprise and by its various controls – inducements and restrictions – over the private sector, the state shall initiate, spur, and steer economic development. It is committed to the belief that development can be brought about or accelerated by government intervention (Myrdal, 1968: 709).

After independence, the state in post-colonial Third World countries took a more active role than in the advanced capitalist countries (Rapley, 2007: 1-2; Chang, 2003: 21). The desire of these countries was not only to acquire political independence but also economic independence.

The deficiency of capital and technology for investment in the developing countries led them to obtain those from advanced countries. However, this was the ‘Cold War’ ridden period marked by tension between two superpowers. There was a sharp polarization in almost everything between the USA (United States of America) and the former USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). In this context, the state’s role in the development and social change in Asian and African Third World countries was influenced by this sharp political and economic polarization between the USA and the former USSR.³ Therefore, different economic and political ideologies and internal subjective considerations, such as internal injustices, paternalistic and welfare ideologies of local political bodies, affected the state’s role in these countries. While some countries have followed capitalist economic development and social change, some followed the socialist model. Many of the post-colonial less developed countries followed a mixed model. However, as mentioned above, state planning and intervention could be seen as a constant in these models. Also common to these countries was ‘import substitution policies’ to protect infant industrialization from powerful international competitors.

As a result, an increasing number of previously raw-material-producing countries in the developing world entered the stage of rapid industrialization through massive flows of capital from the advanced capitalist countries such as the United States. This transnational, cooperate-initiated, capitalist expansion in some developing countries has caused for labeling them “export-oriented industrialization.” Consequently, some countries like South Korea and Taiwan have followed export-oriented industrialization. Under this model, it was expected to provide solutions to three major problems: creations of jobs and reduction of unemployment, training of skilled industrial labor force, and the transfer of technology and increase of foreign exchange (Berberoglu, 1992: 49-50). This approach was considered a most effective strategy to minimize inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth, which would soon destroy the economic backwardness in these countries. It was also believed that this economic development could create a better physical quality of life. Economic development was seen as a means to generate the wealth needed for social infrastructure and services.

According to the neo-classical theory, one of the main reasons for the Newly Industrialized Countries (NIC) success was the minimal state’s intervention in the economy (Kiely, 1995: 86-7). But later, it was recognized that this success was the outcome of state subsidies and protectionism, infrastructure development, radical agrarian reforms (Booth, 1999;

³ See, Preston, P.W. (1996) *Development Theory: An Introduction*, pp 166-69. Oxford: Blackwell publishers

Bhaduri and Nayar, 1996, Castells, 1992) as well as international geopolitical concerns during the Cold War period (Kiely, 1995; Appelbaume and Henderson, 1992). As such, the visible hand of the state has played a very crucial role in most of the late industrialized countries.

The development and modernization models that some other post-colonial countries followed were not associated with the dominant principles followed by the USA after World War II. For instance, after its communist revolution in 1949, China viewed rural development as paramount for development and modernization. Central state planning was the key to the system, and series of five-year plans were implemented accordingly. However, after the 1960s, China adopted industrialization as a way of development and modernization. Some other Asian countries also have followed the socialist path of economic development and overall modernization. In the African context, some post-colonial African countries were inspired by the socialist model but with African communitarian roots (Willis, 2005; Cooper and Packard, 2005: 131; Rist, 2002: 123-39; Chang, 2003: 23).

Many of the countries in the post-colonial world followed a mixed model for development and modernization during the post-war period. Having experienced capitalist imperialism during the colonial period, leaders of many post-colonial countries tended to distrust the capitalist market economy. Therefore, after independence, the successive governments of these countries chose to promote economic growth through the state-centered planning process retaining state control of key industries and the supply system, but not completely adopting a socialist route.⁴ At the same time, these countries aimed for developing social infrastructure and social welfare such as education, health care, a guarantee of minimum standard of living, reduction of disparities under the interventionist functions of the state and government.

However, state intervention in economic and social development spheres has not been initiated since their independence. Even before independence, some nationalist leaders of these colonized countries had begun to formulate future development plans for their countries. As mentioned above, they have been inspired by the experience of the Soviet Union model, which had succeeded in achieving industrialization and infrastructure development under the central planning process. A clear example in this regard is India. During its national movement, Indian national leaders drafted its future development plan focusing on different aspects of socio-economic development (Chatterjee, 1994 [1993]: 200-219). With these planning procedures, Indian national leaders planned their future development under the intervention of self-government, for which they struggled. Chaudhuri notes,

The National Planning Commission (NCP) was established in October 1938 under the Chairmanship of Jawaharlal Nehru to draw an outline for Independent India's Planned Development...The formation of the NPC clearly expressed the intention of the Congress to adopt planning as the most effective means for the comprehensive economic development of the new nation (Chaudhuri, 1995: 211, a highlight in original).

It is widely pointed out, the Nehruvian state of India after the independence was vitally committed to 'development' through planning that made India a modern nation.

⁴ As pointed out by Ravinder Kaur (2003) considering Indian experience, the idea of planned development as the proper and inevitable way for the development of India has been accepted by many scholars in sociology and anthropology. Due to that, according to Kaur, the debates on paths of development (whether to adopt the socialist or the capitalist paths) seems to have died down in sociological and anthropological literature, while, somewhat recently, scholars seems to be returning to this debate. See, Kaur, Ravinder (2003) *Development Sociology and the 'Poverty' Question*, in *The Practice of Sociology*, ed Maitrayee Chaudhuri. New Delhi: Orient Longman

In addition to economic development under an interventionist state, there was a strong commitment in some of these post-colonial countries towards the progress of social infrastructure and social welfare, such as education, health care, a guarantee of minimum standard of living, and reduction of disparities. This inclination of these countries, which mainly were under British colonial power, had the origin from the last phase of colonialism itself. ‘Royal Commission on British Colonies,’ which was appointed to investigate the condition of the British colonies in the world in the 1930s, described those colonies as ‘tropical slums.’ This report led the British government to revise its ‘Law of Development of the Colonies’, insisting that the colonial power maintain a minimum level of health, education, and nutrition among its subjects in the colonies. As a result, the British government passed ‘Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940’ to allocate resources for the basic welfare in the British colonies (McPherson, 1987: 67). Under this Act, the British colonial government in Asia and Africa intervened in developing social infrastructure and distributing social welfare facilities among the native population of those countries. In this context, Nabudere (1997) identified two facts that buttressed state intervention in African countries under the British Crown. He says,

The first was that large human and economic investments were necessary before Third World people could be considered “fit for self-government” and independence. The second, as far as the British were concerned, was the belief that as African became more “detrified,” the state would have to assume the social welfare functions formerly performed within the “tribal” social security systems (Nabudere, 1997: 206).

Subsequently, the ‘Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940’ provided the way for the beginning of formal, organized welfare and the development of social infrastructures in British colonies. Colonial governments started to provide funds for some areas of social development like education and health care. After that, in the last phase of the independence, there were strong inclinations of the paternalism of local political bodies of Asian and African colonized countries to continue the above social development and welfare programs on behalf of indigenous populations of their countries. In this context, “already before independence, many nationalist and ‘socialist’ movements had declared their intention to extend the social services to their people and, on coming to power, many gave to priority to increasing health, education, housing, and other social provisions” (Midgley, 1987: 121). These provisions, it was hoped, would improve the lives of the native population.

On the other hand, gaining political independence was a defining point for state intervention in post-colonial Third World countries. Political independence gave new aspirations to both people and the ruling elites of those new states. People of these countries relied on the state for gaining socio-economic benefits such as lands, education, salaried employment, or the acquisition of more influential and better-rewarding positions. In this context, Kothari says,

There has been with us, especially in the post-colonial world, a presumption that the state as a mediator in ameliorating the harshness of traditional social structures for the purpose of ensuring justice and equality, a protector of vulnerable peoples and liberator of oppressed and colonized populations, and an engine of growth and development that usher in a new civil order based on progress and prosperity and confer rights to life and liberty, equality, and dignity, on the people at large (2002: 73).

After achieving independence, the prime object of the independent states was to create dynamic modern nations. During the liberation movement against colonialism, leaders of some of these countries were influenced by Marxist political ideals of greater social and economic equality. And, they were influenced by the successive experience of the planned development of the Soviet Union. The prime aims of these countries were also economic development and

overall modernization containing developments of social infrastructure, raising the living conditions of the people, creation of egalitarian society, and so on. Accordingly, these aims were spelled out even in the new constitutions of these countries (Myrdal, 1968). Thus, unlike the pre-colonial states in Asia and Africa, which were not enveloping regimes that controlled the entire social fabric, post-colonial states penetrated the entire social and economic life through their economic, administrative, and even political policies aimed at gaining development and modernization. Whether it was achieved or not, these states sought to secure their legitimacy through solving their population's matters related to poverty, unemployment, etc. This is what Partha Chatterjee says regarding the modern state, "This regime secures its legitimacy not by the citizen's participation in matters of the state but by claiming to provide for the well-being of the population" (1998: 279). Therefore, state intervention in social, economic development and overall modernization has been a significant ingredient of the post-colonial Third world countries.

Within this context, it is clear that the state and its government have directly intervened in the social and economic development and overall modernization of the post-colonial Third World countries. The domestic social, political, and economic conditions, acceptance of the ideology of planned changes for development, and competitive aid donations during the post-war period significantly influenced the state to initiate state-directed development programs in these countries. Subsequently, "above initial structural changes enabled Third World states, once they achieved their political independence, to embark on programs of state-managed and directed economic "development" and "modernization" (Nabudere, 1997: 207). Henceforth, since the beginning of independence, the size of the apparatus of government in many Third World countries has increased substantially. For instance, much of the rapid development of the public sector was triggered due to the expansion of the service sector in these respective countries. There was also a massive building of social infrastructure of education, agricultural extension, and medical care with the increasing role of the government in the economy in the post-war period.

4The balance sheet of the role of the state in post-colonial countries: Experience in Sri Lanka

Analysis of the balance sheet of development, modernization, and social changes in post-colonial countries under direct state intervention must be critical, as there are positive and negative infracts. One of the best examples is Sri Lanka, a post-colonial country that followed state intervention for development and overall modernization and societal changes. Sri Lanka has often been described as an exceptional case in the developing world due to its high-level human development record, similar to some developed countries (Sen, 2004; Austin, 1994). The rationale behind this exceptional dimension of the country's human development can be considered mainly as the necessary consequence of state intervention to uplift its population. Most of these welfare distribution schemes started in the mid-1930s. The enactment of this social legislation was a direct result of political transformations that were introduced in 1931. From that point, the Sri Lankan state has played a paternalistic role as a provider and distributor of its resources for its subjects. After independence in 1948, Sri Lanka has allocated a considerable amount of its revenue as welfare expenditure. Each successive government has paid much attention to welfare distributions that impacted the country's social, economic, and political life.

Since the State Council system was established, commitment to benevolent distributive mechanisms became an integral part of the political system. After the independence in 1948, successive governments of Sri Lanka have sought to follow these distributive mechanisms

further but often within a narrowly politicized framework. Because of its seventeen years of experience of universal suffrage and the electorate system, a relatively high degree of political consciousness had developed in the country when Sri Lanka gained independence. Political parties and politicians were ready to act as benefactors for the people, as they needed popular support to come to power and be famous for political survival (Dwight et al., 2001: 136; Alailima, 1997). Hence, with prevailing social service components and new such schemes, political parties projected that the independent Sri Lanka as a welfare state (Marga, 1974). And public of the country anticipated the state's moral responsibility is to dealing with poverty, helping the masses, social welfare practices, etc. This led to the dependence of the masses on the state.

The subsequent development in this regard was that the distributive mechanism of the state developed within a clear electoral political base. Masses' awareness of state activities has created a symbol for the particular politicians and political parties who initiated those state activities. It made the mentality of clientelism among the masses on those politicians and political parties. It could be seen that party political links have gradually become a significant factor within this changing process; mainly, when the benevolent distributive mechanism of the state declined, limited state resources started to be handled based on the political affiliation. This development led to the exclusion of segments of the population from the limited socio-economic benefits of the state (Vitharana, 2009; 2014). This enhanced significance of the party politics (sometimes ethnic and community politics) has fostered an idea among some parts of the country's population that the allocation of state resources has been based on political patronage rather than apolitical qualifications. This situation has challenged the dominant modern discourse that the administrative mechanism of the state should be apolitical (Weber, 1978; Ferguson, 2001 [1990]). As it is mentioned above, this is one aspect in which analysis on the balance sheet of this whole process of state intervention on development, modernization, and societal changes in post-colonial countries has to be considered.

5 Role of the post-colonial state in a transnational frame

In the preceding sections, it was observed that the process of becoming modern or the broad theme of development, modernization, has been the focal point of most Asian, African post-colonial countries even before they gained independence. Though there were different development and modernization models during the post-colonial time, the state's role in economic development and overall modernization was critical. However, since the late 1970s, particularly within the globalized transnational context of the world, the role of the state and government in development and modernization in the Third World countries has come to a crucial point due to several significant challenges.

Transnational phenomena of globalization have impacted and alerted the role of the Third World nation-states in many ways. In the era of globalization, the rise of quasi- "state-like" institutions (like the World Trade Organization that operate and regulate the conduct of states, economies, and people at a supra-national level) could be seen. The globalization process also challenges the two key concepts, territoriality, and sovereignty, that lie at the heart of a *nation-state*. This situation is followed by the broader-transgressing circulations of people, image, money, and goods that further challenge the role of the nation-state and even the demands of separatist ethnic movements (Sharma and Gupta, 2006: 6). At the same time, these nation-states are increasingly unable to perform their redistributive role: the number of resources they could extract and distribute was becoming smaller. Another crucial factor was the failure of economic development and ineffectiveness of the public sector in many Asian, African post-colonial developing countries.

Although the socio-economic structures of different parts of the post-colonial world were not identical with the Keynesian welfare state in the developed world, post-colonial developing countries focused on neo-liberal policies within global political and economic changes and the need of rapid economic development. Nevertheless, there were criticisms of the interventionist role of the state that was followed for real economic and social orientation in these countries. According to neo-liberal analysis, problems of the development of the Third World countries are the products of “too much government” (Kiely, 1995: 128). In this context, Jessop (1999) argues that the state in the post-Fordist, neo-liberal context is a qualitatively new state form, and we need to shift our frame of analysis from the government to governance. He further contends that while the Keynesian Welfare State of the Euro-American type may well be eroding by becoming denationalized, destabilized, and internationalized, not all national states forms are necessarily retreating (quoted from Sharma and Gupta, 2006: 22).

In the case of post-colonial countries, the introduction of liberal economic policies and transnational government mechanisms such as Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) have played a significant role in minimizing the state’s role in redistributive and welfare mechanisms. International development agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank provide consultant roles on SAP to developing countries. These policies sought to reduce public expenditures on social services such as education and health care and currency devaluation while enhancing trade liberalization, privatization, and opening up the economy to international competition. Accordingly, the “privatization” of the public sector entails dispersing the state’s governance and redistributive functions to non-state and voluntary organizations. As influential transnational, non-government organizations (NGO) and foundations (like CARE, OXFAM, Save the Children, Ford Foundation, etc.) bring models of development and resources directly to specific populations without necessarily going through national governments, the role of the state and apparatus of government in development and modernization further diminished (Sharma and Gupta, 2006: 22-4; Edelman and Haugerud, 2005: 7). As the bipolarity aid donor competition between world superpowers ceased at the beginning of the 1990s, developing countries were compelled to adopt these policies in return for continuing financial support from the funding agencies and transnational organizations of global capitalism. This framework may well signal a “de-governmentalization of the state” or as a “de-statization of government” (Rose, 2006 [1996]: 157). Henceforth, it is clear that those neo-liberal policies in a globalized transnational framework stand in sharp contrast to the patron ideas of the state in the Third World countries.

However, international development discourse also locates states as primary agents for national development and as the chief institutions for the implementation of policies. For, economic development policies and interventions suggested under SAPs should be negotiated by International development organizations and government officials as NGOs or any other representatives do not have authority for such negotiations (Sharma and Gupta, 2006: 20-1).

6. Conclusion

Improve the quality of life was the fundamental expectation of post-colonial developing countries since their independence. During the colonial period, most of these countries had been exploited as resource-generating centers for industrial products of the West. Therefore, the economic conditions and living conditions of the public of these countries were relatively poor. Hence, the primary objective of anti-colonial, independent movements in these countries was to replace the colonial rule with self-government to develop these countries’ so-called backward economy and society under direct state interventions. Thus, in contrast to the pre-colonial state

of affairs, when the modern state was being established, it etched itself into the imagination of National leaders and the general public on social practices, moral judgments, and its imaginative possibilities in a way that no previous political agency had ever done (Khilnani, 1998: 41). In this context, post-colonial countries' state (including the apparatus of government and political parties) has subsequently given rise to a narrow concept of it as a policy-making actor, frequently identified in the literature with 'the public interest.' This is indeed a compelling view of the state in much discourse about 'development,' which appeals to a notion of a benevolent Leviathan chartered to bring about growth or to eliminate poverty" (Fuller and Harries, 2000: 3), and necessary social infrastructure and service facilities.

Different segments of society have critically questioned the interventionist role of the state as a benevolent distributor. However, it does not mean that role of the state in improving the living condition, particularly in the developing world, has to be abandoned. Since the end of the 1970s, established political-economic ideologies on development have been revised to accept neo-liberal economic policies that encourage public entities' privatization, dispersal of the state's governance, and reduction of redistributive functions and welfare expenditure. During the last two decades, globally accepted policy was that the state should provide basic services to the public. Chatterjee pointed out, "There is a growing sense now that certain basic conditions of the life must be provided to the people everywhere and that if the national or local governments do not provide them, someone else must, whether it is other states or international agencies or non-governmental organizations" (2008: 4). Natural characteristics of global wealth sharing can support this idea. According to an attractive report issued by an international non-governmental organization, OXFAM, on the inequality of global wealth sharing, in 2014, the richest 1% of people in the world owned 48% of global wealth, leaving just 52% to be shared between the other 99% of adults on the planet. Almost 52% is owned by those included in the wealthiest 20% leaving just 5.5% for the remaining 80% of people globally (OXFAM, 2015). Even though this brief report by OXFAM did not figure out the situation in individual countries, particularly in the developing world, there is no doubt that the condition of wealth inequality between rich and poor in those countries is becoming worst. Moreover, there are counter-arguments from the developing countries' perspectives against neoliberal ideologies. According to these counter-arguments, the state's role as a re-distributor in developing countries is significant even in the contemporary global context since grooving inequalities among those countries.

As a result of the state being prisoner of the privileged classes and transnational patrons, it can be seen that many post-colonial countries are moving towards economic liberalization without concerning about the plight of their public. The focus on the demands of redistribution, welfare, or a participatory framework of the economic management under the liberalization policies has shifted. However, the need of the interventionist role of the state and government in these countries remains (Kothari, 2002; Bhaduri and Nayyar, 1996). It seems that even in the neoliberal context, the state should continue its effort to develop the physical infrastructure, just as it must strengthen, and not dilute, its role in creating social infrastructure. According to this argument, this continuing role of the government is essential to bring the people who are in backward or helpless conditions into the national development goal. However, the state should maximize the utilization of all human and physical resources effectively and efficiently to improve their living conditions, which could be instrumental for the modernization and development of those countries.

References

- [1] Abrams, Philip. (2006[1988]). 'Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State,' in *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, ed. Aradana Sharma and Akhil Gupta. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing
- [2] Alailima, Patricia. (1997) 'Social policy in Sri Lanka,' in *Dilemmas of Development: Fifty Years of economic Changes in Sri Lanka*, ed. W.D. Lakshman. Colombo: Sri Lankan Association of Economists
- [3] Appelbaume, Richard P. and Jeffrey Henderson,. (1992). *States and Development in the Asian Pacific Rim*. London: Sage Publications
- [4] Austin, Denis,. (1994). *Democracy and Violence in India and Sri Lanka*. London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs and Pinter Publishers Limited
- [5] Basu, Sibaji Pratim. (2005). 'State: In Europe and the Third World,' in *Political Sociology*, ed. Satyabrata Chakraborty. New Delhi: Macmillan
- [6] Berberoglu, Berch. (1992). *The Political Economy of Development: Development Theory and the Prospects for Change in the Third World*. Albany: State University of New York Press
- [7] Bhaduri, Amit and Deepak Nayyar,. (1996). *The Intelligent Person's Guide to Liberalization*. New Delhi: Penguin Books
- [8] Booth, Anne. (1999). 'Initial Conditions and Miraculous Growth: Why is South East Asia Different from Taiwan and South Korea,' *World Development* 27 (2): 301-321
- [9] Castells, Manuel. (1992.) 'Four Asian Tigers with a Dragon Head: A Comparative Analysis of the State, Economy, and Society in the Asian Pacific Rim,' in *States and Development in the Asian Pacific Rim*, ed. Richard P. Appelbaume and Jeffrey Henderson. London: Sage Publications
- [10] Chang, Ho-Joon. (2003). *Globalization, Economic Development and the Role of the State*. London: Zed Books
- [11] Chatterjee, Partha. (1998). 'Community in the East,' *Economic and Political Weekly* 33 (6): 277-282
- [12] _____ (2008). *Democracy and Economic Transformation in India, Golden Jubilee Lectures: Occasional Papers (new Series) 2008/3*. Delhi: University of Delhi (Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics)
- [13] Chaudhuri, Maitrayee, (1995). 'Citizens, workers and emblems of culture: An analysis of the First Plan document on women,' in *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 29 (1 & 3): 211-235
- [14] Chirot, Daniel. (1977). *Social Change in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich
- [15] *Collins Dictionary of Sociology*. (2006). ed. David Jary and Julia Jary. Glasgow: HarperCollins Publishers
- [16] Cooper, Frederick and Randall Packard. (2005). 'The History and Politics of Development Knowledge,' in *The Anthropology of Development and Globalization: From Classical Political Economy to Contemporary Neoliberalism*, ed. Marc Edelman, and Angelique Haugerud. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing
- [17] Deshpande, Satish. (2004). 'Modernization,' in *Handbook of Indian Sociology*, ed. Veena Das. New Delhi: Oxford University Press
- [18] Dwight H. Perkins, et al. (2001). *Economic of Development*. New York: W.W. Norton & company Inc.
- [19] Eckstein, Alexander. (1958). 'Individualism and the Role of the State in Economic Growth,' in *Economic Development and Cultural Change* VI: 81-87

- [20] Edelman, Marc and Angelique Haugerud. (2005). *The Anthropology of Development and Globalization: From Classical Political Economy to Contemporary Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing
- [21] Ferguson, James. (2001 [1990]). *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
- [22] Foucault, Michel. (2006 [1991]). 'Governmentality,' in *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, ed. Aradana Sharma and Akhil Gupta. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing
- [23] Fuller, C.J and John Harriss. (2000). 'For an Anthropology of the Modern Indian State,' in *The Everyday State and Society in Modern India*, ed. C.J Fuller and Veronique Beni. New Delhi: Social Science Press
- [24] Gabriel, Tom. (1991). *The Human Factor in Rural Development*. London: Belhaven Press
- [25] Gibney, Frank. (1998). 'Politics and Governance in Japan,' in *governance in the Asia-Pacific*, ed. Richard Maidment et al. London: Routledge in association with The Open University
- [26] Giddens, Anthony. (2000). *Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press
- [27] Griffin, Keith. (1973). 'Underdevelopment in History,' in *The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment*, ed. Charles K. Wilber. New York: Random Press
- [28] Held, David et al. 1 (ed) .(1989). *States and Societies*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell in association with The Open University
- [29] Jessop, Bob. (1999). 'Narrating the Future of the National Economy and the National State: Remarks on Remapping Regulation and Reinventing Governance,' in *State/Culture: State Formation After the Cultural Turn*, ed. George Steinmetz. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press
- [30] Khilnani, Sunil. (1998). *The Idea of India*. Harmondsworth: Penguin
- [31] Kiely, Ray. (1995). *Sociology and Development: The Impasse and Beyond*. London: UCL Press Limited
- [32] Kothari, Rajni. (2002). 'Masses, Classes and the State,' in *Social Movements and the South*, ed. Ghanshyam Shah. New Delhi: Sage Publications
- [33] MacPherson, Stewart. (1987) 'The Origins of Welfare in the Third World,' in *Comparative Social Policy and the Third World*, ed. Stewart MacPherson, and James Midgley. Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books
- [34] Marga,. (1974). *Welfare and Growth in Sri Lanka*. Colombo: Marga institute
- [35] Midgley, James. (1987). 'Theoretical Implications of Third World Social Policy Research,' in *Comparative Social Policy and the Third World*, ed. Stewart MacPherson, and James Midgley. Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books
- [36] Myrdal, Gunnar. (1968). *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*, Vol. I and II. London: Allen Lane the Penguin Press
- [37] Nabudere, Dani W. (1997). 'Beyond Modernization and Development, or Why the Poor Reject Development,' *Geografiska Annaler, Series B, Human Geography, Current Development Thinking*, 79 (4): 203-215
- [38] OXFAM. (2015). **WEALTH: HAVING IT ALL AND WANTING MORE**. <https://www.oxfam.org> (accessed 01.09.2016)
- [39] Preston, P.W. (1996). *Development Theory: An Introduction*, pp 166-69. Oxford: Blackwell publishers

- [40] Rapley, John. (2007). *Understanding Development: Theory and Practice in the Third World*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.
- [41] Rist, Gilbert. (2002). *The history of development: from Western Origins to Global Faith*. New Delhi: Academic Foundation
- [42] Rose, Nikolas. (2006[1996]). 'Governing "advanced" Liberal Democracies,' in *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, ed. Aradana Sharma and Akhil Gupta. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing
- [43] Sen, Amartya. (2004). *Development as Freedom*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press
- [44] Sharma, Aradana and Gupta, Akhil. (2006). 'Introduction: Rethinking Theories of the State in an Age of Globalization,' in *The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*, ed. Aradana Sharma and Akhil Gupta. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing
- [45] Supple, Barry. (1989). 'States and Industrialization: Britain and Germany in the Nineteenth Century,' in *States and Societies*, ed. David Held et al. Oxford: Basil Blackwell in association with The Open University
- [46] Szirmai, Adam. (2005). *The Dynamics of Socio-Economic Development: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- [47] Todaro, Michel P., and Stephen C. Smith. (2012). *Economic Development*. New Delhi: Pearson
- [48] Vitharana, L. D. Sarath. (2009). *Political Intervention and Social Change: A Case study of a Village in Northwestern Sri Lanka*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
- [49] _____ (2014). 'Buddhism, Welfarism and Social Development in Sri Lanka,' in *Buddhism for Sustainable Development and Social Change*, ed. Thich Nhat Tu and Thich Duc Thien, Vietnam Buddhist University Series 21
- [50] Weber, Eugen. (1977). *Peasants into Frenchman: The Modernization of Rural France: 1870-1914*. London: Chatto & Windus.
- [51] Weber, Max. (1978). *Economy and Society*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley: University of California Press
- [52] Willis, Kati. (2005). *Theories and Practice of Development*. London: Routledge