

## THE THEORY OF INTERNAL COLONIZATION: THE SOUTH AFRICAN CASE

by

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1. Introduction

The view that there are close parallels between the external relationships established by colonial powers over colonized peoples and the relationship of ethnic, cultural, national or racial groups within some Latin American societies, the United States, and South Africa has led to the use of the notion of "internal colonialism" in the analysis of these societies. (1)

The specific feature which is said to distinguish "internal" from "normal" colonialism is the fact that in the former the colonizing "nation" or "race" or other group occupies the same territory as the colonized people. As Simons and Simons (1969: 610) put it:

"The imperial colonial qualities of the society ... become visible by comparison with the typical colony. In its normal form, the colony is a distinct territorial entity, spatially detached from its imperial metropolis ..."

In all other important respects, the implication is, the components of the "normal" imperial-colonial relation are to be found within the borders of a single state to an extent which justifies the view that it constitutes an internal colonialism. In particular, it is argued in this approach that the "underdeveloped" (and "underdeveloping") condition of subordinate ethnic and racial groups, and the geographical areas they occupy within the boundaries of the state, is produced and maintained by the same mechanisms of cultural domination, political oppression and economic exploitation which, at the international level, produce the development of the advanced capitalist states through the imperialist underdevelopment of the colonial satellites.

Notwithstanding the apparently unproblematical use of the terms "imperialist" and "colonialism" in the passage cited above (and in the writing on "internal colonialism" generally), it is obvious from the literature that there are differing conceptions of imperialism and colonialism, and that these are not all equally suitable for conversion into a notion of "internal colonialism". Lenin's insistence in his Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism that the export of capital is a crucial distinguishing feature of imperialism and, therefore,

of colonialism, in the monopoly stage of capitalism, is only one relevant example. It is, therefore, of considerable importance to analyse the conceptions of colonialism and imperialism which serve as the model from which the notion of "internal colonialism" is derived by analogy.

## 2. A Critique of the Literature on "Internal Colonialism"

In the theory of internal colonialism, the colonial relation appears to be characterized by two main elements. Firstly, the colonial relationship is conceived of as occurring between different countries, total populations, nations, geographical areas, or between peoples of different races, colours and cultures. As Blauner (1972: 12-13), for example, expresses it:

"The colonial order in the modern world has been based on the dominance of White Westerners over non-Westerners of colour: racial oppression and the racial conflict to which it gives rise are endemic to it, much as class exploitation and conflict are fundamental to capitalist societies."

Secondly, the colonial relationship is characterized, in a general way, as involving domination, oppression and exploitation. Again, Blauner (1969: 395) provides a convenient statement:

"Colonialism traditionally refers to the establishment of domination over a geographically external political unit, most often inhabited by people of a different race and culture, where this domination is political and economic, and the colony exists subordinated to and dependent upon the mother country. Typically the colonisers exploit the land, the raw materials, the labour, and other resources of the colonised nation; in addition a formal recognition is given to the differences in power, autonomy and political status, and various agencies are set up to maintain this subordination."

It is these two features which constitute the core of internal colonialism, that is, of colonialism internal to a particular society. Casanova (1965: 33), for example, states:

"Internal colonialism corresponds to a structure of social relations based on domination and exploitation among culturally heterogeneous, distinct groups."

And Tabb (1970: 15) puts it thus:

"The economic relations of the ghetto of White America closely parallel those between third world nations and the industrially advanced countries."

In regard to South Africa, the argument has been formulated much more complexly, as follows, by the South African Communist Party (The Road to South African Freedom, n.d., 25-26):

"South Africa is not a colony but an independent state. Yet masses of our people enjoy neither independence nor freedom. The conceding of independence to South Africa by Britain in 1910 ... was designed in the interests of imperialism. Power was transferred not into the hands of the masses of the people of South Africa, but into the hands of the White minority alone. The evils of colonialism, in so far as the non-White majority was concerned, were perpetuated and reinforced. A new type of colonialism was developed, in which the oppressing white nation occupied the same territory as the oppressed people themselves and lived side by side with them."

"On one level, that of 'White South Africa', there are all the features of an advanced capitalist state in its final stage of imperialism. There are highly developed industrial monopolies, and the merging of industrial and finance capital. The land is farmed along capitalist lines, employing wage labour, and producing cash crops for the local and export markets. The South African monopoly capitalists ... export capital abroad ..."

"But on another level, that of 'non-White South Africa', there are all the features of a colony. The indigenous population is subjected to national oppression, poverty and exploitation, lack of all democratic rights and political domination by a group which does everything it can to emphasize and perpetuate its alien 'European' character. The African Reserves show the complete lack of industry, communications, transport and power resources which are characteristic of ... territories under colonial rule.... Typical, too, of imperialist rule, is the reliance by the state upon brute force and terror, and upon the most backward tribal elements and institutions which are deliberately and artificially preserved. Non-White South Africa is the colony of White South Africa itself."

(My emphasis)

It is clear that by contrast with, for example, Blauner, the Communist Party makes no assumption that race, ethnicity or culture is independent of the mode of capitalist exploitation. On the contrary, the Programme, as appears from the above passage, expressly, and in my view correctly, links racial oppression and domination with capitalism. But what is the nature of this link? It is possible to extract two rather different answers to this question from the Programme.

The first answer seems to depend on a contrast which is implicitly drawn between capitalist societies which are culturally, ethnically and racially homogeneous and in which relations of class exploitation are dominant and those

societies in which both capitalist exploitation and internal colonial relations exist side by side (with the latter frequently dominant). Two questions arise here. Firstly, what is the precise relationship between the specific system of class exploitation and domination and the specific relations of racial, ethnic, cultural or national exploitation and domination characteristic of internal colonialism? Secondly, in what way does internal colonial exploitation differ from class exploitation?

In so far as the Programme separates class and race relations, it does not seem to spell out the answer to either of these questions - it stops with the rather general proposition that capitalism in South Africa goes hand in hand with "national oppression", etc.

It may be noted that a similar lack of specificity is to be found in other writings on internal colonialism. Thus Casanova (1965: 33), for example, asserts:

"The colonial structure and internal colonialism are distinguished from the class structure since colonialism is not only a relation of exploitation of the workers by the owners of raw materials or of production and their collaborators, but also a relation of domination and exploitation of a total population (with its distinct classes, proprietors, workers) by another population which also has distinct classes (proprietors and workers).

While this passage is useful for the way in which it points to the, or rather to one of the modes of class exploitation (that is, the appropriation of surplus value) entailed in imperialism, it nevertheless fails to link "the exploitation of the workers" to the exploitation of one "total population" by another, nor does it explain the meaning of exploitation in the latter case.

Similarly, Johnson (1972: 282) states:

"The population of internal colonies is subject to discriminatory practices over and above those characteristic of relations between dominant classes and underclasses."

But, despite a lengthy discussion of "Class relations and colonial relations", he is unable to clarify the relationship between "discriminatory practices" and class relations or the differences between the two. He can only assert the differences:

"The major differences in the relations between the dominant classes and institutions of society and marginal underclasses on the one hand, and internal colonies (an internal colony constitutes a society within a society based upon racial, linguistic and/or marked cultural differences as well as differences of social class) on the other hand, revolve around different institutionalized practices of domination and different means of social control. It is important to emphasize that all the classes of the dominant society rest upon the colonial population." (1972: 281)

What appears from the above passages is that no attempt is made to identify the specific mode of exploitation and domination characteristic of internal colonialism which purports to differentiate from class exploitation and domination. Instead, there is a general reference to exploitation, used in a descriptive sense, and to ill-defined states of racial or ethnic oppression which are linked, in some way, to capitalism.

The second answer contained in the Programme appears to arrive at a similar result by a different path. An alternative interpretation of the passage from the Programme quoted above is that it is arguing that class relations are simply assimilated to race relations. Thus "white South Africa" is identified with the "capitalist state" and the capitalist system, while "non-white South Africa" is identified with "the colony". From this point on, the analysis of class relations gives way to the description of white domination and exploitation of Blacks in terms of the internal colonial analogy.

It is possible to argue that where there is a complete coincidence between race and class the concepts defining the relationship between classes may be utilized in defining the relationship between races or ethnic groups. (Compare Stavenhagen, 1965). Where this is not the case (and it is not the case in South Africa), the substitution of racial groups for classes in the analysis requires a specification of the nature of the relationship between the former groups. This leads once more to the two questions posed above.

This conclusion is underlined by the fact that the characterisation of internal colonialism as a relation between racial or ethnic entities necessarily involves, despite the recognition that these entities themselves have complex class structures, an analysis which treats these categories as homogeneous. But it is this very feature which makes the specification of the mode or modes of class exploitation and the analysis of their precise relationship to the structure of racial domination imperative.

Indeed, the Programme of the South African Communist Party recognizes the duality, but since it does not make the necessary analysis, its position appears contradictory:

"Power [in 1910] was transferred not into the hands of the masses of people of South Africa, but into the hands of the White minority alone." (p. 25)

This followed on p. 27 with:

"All Whites enjoy privileges in South Africa. They alone can vote and be elected to parliament and local government bodies. They have used this privilege to monopolise nearly all economic, educational, cultural and social opportunities. This gives the impression that the ruling class is composed of the entire White population. In fact, however, real power is in the hands of the monopolists who own and control the mines, the banks and finance houses, and most of the farms and major industries."

In what follows an attempt is made to suggest the way in which the analytical gap referred to above may be overcome.

### 3. Imperialism and Modes of Production

The obfuscating consequences of an analysis in terms of racial, ethnic, cultural or national entities is nowhere clearer than in the use of the notion of exploitation to describe the relations between such entities. The reason for this is that, while the concept of exploitation can have a rigorous and explicit meaning in defining class relations, it becomes a vague, descriptive term in the characterization of relations between such entities as racial, national or cultural groups. Bettelheim (1972: 300, 301), in commenting on the notion of the exploitation of the "poor countries" by the "rich ones", has made the same point in relation to "normal" colonialism. He states:

"Because the concept of exploitation expresses a production relation - production of surplus labour and expropriation of this by a social class - it necessarily relates to class relations (and a relation between 'countries' is not and cannot be a relation between classes)." (2)

He argues that "it is not possible to give a strict meaning to the notion of exploitation of one country by another country" (p. 301), and he concludes:

"Henceforth it is necessary to think of each 'country' as constituting a social formation with a specific structure, in particular because of the existence of classes with contradictory interests. It is this structure that determines the way in which each social formation fits into international production relations." (p. 300)

With only slight amendments, this passage applies equally to the case of internal colonialism. Thus, we may say that, in order to avoid the abstraction involved in treating racial or ethnic groups as undifferentiated and homogeneous, we must think of each such group as having a "... specific structure, in particular because of the existence of classes with contradictory interests". It follows that the concrete social totality is constituted by the complex articulation of class relations within racial or ethnic groups, as well as the relation of classes across these groups, together, we may add, with the ideological and political practices which "fit" these relationships.

This consideration leads directly to the crucial further question of historical specificity. It should be clear from what has so far been argued that the concept of colonialism upon which the internal colonial thesis is based is extremely vague and unspecific. In part, this is due to the failure to distinguish between forms of colonial, political, ideological and cultural domination and modes of imperialist economic exploitation. In turn, this conflation stems from the failure to distinguish differing modes of imperialist economic exploitation, with the result that different forms of colonial domination cannot be related explicitly to different modes of exploitation.

More specifically, much of the analysis of imperialism and under-development (and of internal colonialism) has been based on the assumption that, in the era of capitalist imperialism, exploitation everywhere takes place according to a single, invariant mode. There are two variants of this argument, but both contend that capitalist relations have

"... effectively and completely penetrated even the most apparently isolated sectors of the underdeveloped world."

(Laclau, 1971: 21)

In one variant capitalism is equated with commodity exchange - with the market economy - and consequently the participation of the underdeveloped world in the market is construed as evidence of the total transformation of the indigenous economies into capitalist economies, albeit subordinate ones. This is the position advanced by Frank (1967) in his analysis of Latin America. Laclau (1971) argues that:

"... Frank's theoretical schema involves three types of assertion: 1. Latin America has had a market economy from the beginning; 2. Latin America has been capitalist from the beginning; 3. the dependent nature of its insertion into the capitalist world market is the cause of its underdevelopment. The three assertions claim to refer to a single process identical in its essential aspects from the 16th to the 20th century." (p. 22)

The consequence of this, as Laclau (1971) has shown, is that it becomes impossible to define "the specificity of the exploitative relationship" in operation at a specific moment, and this flows directly from Frank's failure to base his analysis on the concept of relations of production. Thus, an analysis based on the concept of relations of production would have shown, in the particular case of Latin America, not the complete penetration of capitalism but rather that the

"... pre-capitalist character of the dominant relations of production in Latin America was not only not incompatible with production for the world market, but was actually intensified by the expansion of the latter. The feudal regime of the haciendas tended to increase its servile exactions on the peasantry as the growing demands of the world market stimulated maximization of their surplus. Thus, far from expansion of the external market acting as a disintegrating force on feudalism, its effect was rather to accentuate and consolidate it." (p. 30)

It is thus clear from Laclau's argument that it cannot be assumed from the emergence of a dominant capitalist market that non-capitalist economies which participate in that market are, thereby, automatically transformed into capitalist modes of production.

In the second variant of this argument, the analysis is, indeed, based on the concept of the mode of production. In this case it is assumed that the effect of the emergence of capitalism as a dominant mode of production is the necessary and rapid disintegration of non-capitalist productive relations. This view seems to be based on Lenin's discussion of imperialism and Marx's analysis of primitive accumulation. In Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism (1964: 243) Lenin stated:

"The export of capital influences and greatly accelerates the development of capitalism in those countries to which it is exported. While

therefore, the export of capital may tend to a certain extent to arrest development in the capital exporting countries, it can only do so by expanding and deepening the further development of capitalism throughout the world."

In Capital (1961: Vol 1, 714), Marx formulated the notion of primitive accumulation in the following terms:

"The capitalist system presupposes the complete separation of the labourers from all property in the means by which they can realize their labour.... The process, therefore, that clears the way for the capitalist system, can be none other than the process which takes away from the labourer the possession of his means of production; a process that transforms on the one hand, the social means of subsistence and of production into capital, on the other, the immediate producers into wage-labourers. The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production."

Neither Lenin's general characterization of the development of capitalism through imperialism in the era of monopoly capitalism, nor Marx's theoretical analysis of the constitution of capitalism through primitive accumulation, however, can be construed as concrete historical accounts of the actual progression of imperialism and capitalism, either within particular social formation or on a world scale. To interpret Marx and Lenin in this way is precisely to obliterate the analysis of the relationship of capitalism with non-capitalist modes of production and thereby to exclude the possibility of analysing the specificity of the exploitative relations which concretely characterize social formations.

In fact, the relationship of capitalist to non- or pre-capitalist modes of production may vary in a number of ways and for different reasons. Thus in one place the relationship of capital to a non-capitalist mode of production may revolve around the extraction in different ways - by plunder, or the exchange of non-equivalents, or by means of the process of price formation - of the commodities produced by the latter. Geertz's (1963) study of Inner Java is an example of this. At another place, the main focus of the relationship may be on the extraction not of the product but of labour-power. South Africa, as I will show below, is an example of this type of relationship. While in both of these cases the associated political policy turns on the domination and preservation of the non-capitalist societies, in other instances the particular mode of economic exploitation may be accompanied by a policy aimed at or having the effect of destroying the non-capitalist societies.

The relevance of this for the present discussion may be clarified by the following elaboration. In the course of its development, the capitalist mode of production enters into relationships with other, non-capitalist systems of production - the very origins of capitalism in the interstices of feudalism testify to this. Relations with other modes of production first occur within the boundaries of the nation-state. First with trade and later with the development of monopoly capitalism and the export of capital, capital increasingly enters into new relationships with other, non-capitalist modes of production, beyond the borders of the nation-state. These relations, which are exploitive in the strict



sense of the term - they involve directly or indirectly the extraction of the surplus from the direct producers - characterize, in general, the period of capitalist imperialism. These relations of imperialism are constituted within a particular context of political domination and are sustained and supported by a mode of ideological and political practice which varies with the mode of exploitation. But, as Lenin (1916) pointed out, both imperialism and colonialism undergo historical changes:

"Colonial policy and imperialism existed before the latest stage of capitalism, even before capitalism. Rome, founded on slavery, pursued a colonial policy and practised imperialism. But 'general' disquisitions on imperialism which ignore, or put into the background, the fundamental differences between socio-economic formations, inevitably turn into the most vapid banality.... Even the capitalist colonial policy of previous stages of capitalism is essentially different from the colonial policy of finance capital." (n.d., p. 79)

In certain conditions of imperialist development, ideological and political domination tend to be expressed not in terms of the relations of class exploitation which they must sustain but in racial, ethnic, national, etc., terms, and, in all cases, this is related to the fact that the specific mode of exploitation involves conservation, in some form, of the non-capitalist modes of production and social organization, the existence of which provides the foundation of that exploitation. Indeed, it is in part the very attempt to conserve and control the non-capitalist societies in the face of the tendency of capitalist development to disinterpret them, and thereby to undermine the basis of exploitation, that accounts for political policies and ideologies which centre on culture, ethnic, national and racial characteristics.

In certain circumstances capitalism may, within the boundaries of a single state, develop predominantly by means of its relationship to non-capitalist modes of production. When that occurs, the mode of political domination and the content of legitimating ideologies assume racial and ethnic and cultural forms, and for the same reason as in the case of imperialism. In this case, political domination takes on a colonial form, the precise or specific nature of which has to be related to the specific mode of exploitation of the non-capitalist society.

These points can be illustrated, and perhaps made clearer, by an analysis of internal colonialism in South Africa.

#### 4. Internal Colonialism in South Africa

It was suggested in the previous section that one important economic basis of colonial domination is the economic relationship which imperialism establishes between capitalist and non-capitalist modes of production. I also argued that that relationship may take different forms.

In Volume II of Capital (pp. 109, 110), in dealing with the circuit of capital and in particular the commodities which comprise the means of production,

Marx stated:

"Within its process of circulation, in which industrial capital functions either as money or as commodities, the circuit of industrial capital whether as money-capital or as commodity capital, crosses the commodity circulation of the most diverse modes of social production, so far as they produce commodities. No matter whether commodities are the output of production based on slavery, of peasants ... of state enterprise ... or of half-savage hunting tribes, etc; as commodities and money they come face to face with the money and commodities in which the industrial capital presents itself and enter as such into its circuit.... The character of the process of production from which they originate is immaterial. They function as commodities in the market, and as commodities they enter into the circuit of industrial capital as well as into the circulation of the surplus value incorporated into it."

"To replace them (i.e. the commodities entering the capitalist circuit in the above manner) they must be reproduced and to this extent the capitalist mode of production is conditioned on modes of production lying outside of its own stage of development."

While in the above passage Marx's remarks are restricted to commodities which are also means of production, it seems clear that they apply equally to labour-power which is physically produced in a non-capitalist mode of production but which is converted into a commodity by its appearance on the capitalist labour market.

It is this feature, the introduction into the capitalist circuit of production of labour-power physically produced in a non-capitalist economy, that denotes one important feature of imperialism. This "crossing" of different modes of production modifies the relationship between wages and the cost of reproducing labour-power in favour of capital. It is precisely this relationship which is the foundation of "internal colonialism" in South Africa.

In fact, the South Africa social formation is made up of several modes of production, but it is not possible in this paper to discuss all of these or to explore the complex relations between them. For present purposes, the analysis may be restricted to the relationship between the dominant capitalist economy and the mode of production in the African areas (Reserves). The capitalist mode of production in South Africa (as elsewhere) is one in which:

- (i) the direct labourers, who do not own the means of capitalist production, sell their labour-power to the owners of the means of production who are non-labourers;
- (ii) the wage the labourer receives for the sale of his labour-power for a certain period is only a portion of the value created by him during that period, the balance being appropriated as unpaid labour (surplus value) by the owners of the productive means.

This second condition is, of course, related to Marx's conception of labour-power as a commodity and expresses the specific form in which the surplus is extracted from the direct producers in the capitalist mode of production.

The ratio between the surplus product and the necessary product which accrues to the labourer in the form of wages is, in Marx's terms, the rate of surplus value. This rate will obviously vary in accordance with changes in the distribution of the product between necessary and surplus labour. The greater the proportion of the working day devoted to necessary labour, the lower the rate of surplus value, and consequently the rate of profit, all other things remaining equal. It follows that the conditions which determine the amount of time spent on the necessary product are of crucial importance in capitalist production.

In general, commodities exchange at their value. The value of labour-power is determined in the same way as that of other commodities - by the amount of socially necessary labour time which has been expended in its production. As Marx put it:

"The value of labour power is determined, as in the case of every other commodity, by the labour time necessary for the production and consequently also the reproduction of this special article.... Given the individual, the production of labour power consists in his reproduction of himself or his maintenance. Therefore the labour-time requisite for the production of labour-power reduces itself to that necessary for the production of ... the means of subsistence; in other words, the value of labour-power is the value of the means of subsistence necessary for the maintenance of the labourer."

(Capital, Vol 1, p. 171.)

The subsistence necessary for the reproduction of labour-power is extended in at least two ways by Marx:

"the sum of the means of subsistence necessary for the production of labour-power must include the means necessary for the labourers' substitutes, that is, his children ..."

(ibid., p. 172)

In addition:

"The expenses of ... education ... enter pro tanto into the total value spent in its production."

(ibid., p. 172)

There are a number of ways in which the proportion of the working day which is allocated to necessary labour may be decreased. Thus, for example, the value of labour-power may be decreased, or, again, the length of the working day may be increased and, most important for the present argument, labour-power may be acquired at a cost below its value.

As Meillassoux (1973) has pointed out, the means of subsistence acquired by the labourer can be divided into two parts - the direct wages paid to the worker in and during employment and the indirect wages which he receives in the form of social security benefits, for example, unemployment payments, family allowances, health services, education, and so on. In its most advanced form indirect wages are institutionalized in the social welfare arrangements of the

Welfare state, but obviously these arrangements are the outcome of a lengthy historical process.

Under certain conditions, the capitalist mode of production is able to avoid, to a greater or lesser extent, the payment of indirect wages; that is, it is obliged to pay only the immediate sustenance of the labourer but it can avoid paying for his subsistence during unemployment, or for the subsistence of children or costs of education, etc. The most important condition enabling capitalism to pay for labour-power below its cost of reproduction in this way is the availability of a supply of labour-power which is produced and reproduced outside the capitalist mode of production.

In South Africa this condition was (and still is, although to a decreasing extent) met by the presence of non-capitalist modes of agricultural production in the areas of African concentration (particularly, but by no means exclusively, in the Reserves). These modes of production take varied forms which have undergone considerable modification under the impact of capitalism but which, nevertheless, retain in one form or another their non-capitalist characteristics. Thus, in one mode of production where land is held communally by the community and worked by social units based on kinship, the product of labour is "pooled" and then redistributed directly by means of an allocation through the kinship units in accordance with certain rules of distribution. Again, and much more frequently, while land is owned communally, it is allocated to kin-based production units which produce and consume their product. Moreover, even where land is held in individual tenure, it is worked by kin groups between the members of which certain reciprocal obligations of support are in force. Whatever the mode of production, however, the crucial element is the existence of reciprocal obligation of support and consequently a distribution of the product which includes kin absent temporarily from agricultural production on the land held by the kin group.

Given the nature of the relations of production and distribution in such modes of production, the potentiality exists of utilizing labour-power drawn from it into the capitalist sector without fundamentally altering those relations. Thus, as Meillassoux (1973) argues, if the necessary subsistence for the entire year can be produced by labour which is limited to a part of the year, then labour-power will be potentially available to the capitalist sector for the remainder of the year. This potential labour-power can be brought into the circuit of capitalist production, provided that the capitalist sector "finds the means to extract it practically, without the direct intrusion of capital into the self-sustaining sector, an intrusion which would destroy the relations of production and, therefore, the basis of the production of labour-power in the sector external to capitalism. It is presumably in this kind of situation that various "political" measures may be taken to force labour-power onto the market. On the other hand, if the subsistence produced during the productive season is insufficient to meet all necessary needs, then, provided there are no actual productive possibilities beyond the period of agricultural production, the propulsion of labour-power onto the market may occur through the operation of economic forces.

In either case, the significant aspect is that the capitalist sector benefits from the means of subsistence produced in the non-capitalist mode of production to the extent that it is relieved of paying a portion of the necessary means of subsistence by way of indirect wages. This, as I have shown in a previous paper (1972), has the important effect of raising the rate of

surplus value. The uniqueness or specificity of South Africa, in the period of capitalism, lies precisely in this: that it embodies within a single nation-state a relationship characteristic of the external relationships between imperialist states and their colonies (or neo-colonies).

Bettelheim (1972: 297) has pointed out:

"Inside social formations in which the capitalist mode of production is dominant, this domination mainly tends to expanded reproduction of the capitalist mode of production, that is, to the dissolution of the other modes of production and subsumption of their agents to capitalist production relations. The qualification 'mainly' indicates that this is the predominant tendency of the capitalist mode of production within the social formations under consideration. However, this predominant tendency is combined with another secondary tendency, that of 'conservation-dissolution'. This means that within a capitalist social formation the non-capitalist forms of production, before they disappear are 'restructured' (partly dissolved) and thus subordinated to the predominant capitalist relations (and so conserved) ..."

Within the advanced capitalist states themselves the dominant tendency, more or less rapidly, brought about the complete or almost complete dissolution of the non-capitalist relations of production. The explanation for this, in each society, and the specification of the processes involved require, of course, their own historical analysis.

In South Africa, on the contrary, the dominant tendency has been inhibited by the secondary tendency of "conservation-dissolution". That is to say, the tendency of capital accumulation to dissolve the very relationship (with the non-capitalist economies) which makes that accumulation possible (at a particular rate) is blocked by the contradictory tendency of capital to conserve the relationship and with it the non-capitalist economies, albeit in a restructured form, for the reasons already outlined.

The political expression of this imperialist-type relationship takes on a colonial form. This is because, at one level, the conservation of the non-capitalist modes of production necessarily requires the development of ideologies and political policies which revolve around the segregation, and preservation and control, of African "tribal" societies. The ideological focus, it must be stressed, is always necessarily on the "racial" or "tribal" or "national" elements, precisely because of the "tribal" nature of what is being preserved and controlled. (3)

So, too, the policies pursued and the laws passed must have the same focus. The attempt, therefore, to conserve these societies in the face of disruptive tendencies centres on guaranteeing the availability of some land (1913 Land Act) to the "tribe", the preservation of the social and political organization of the "tribe", and thus the retention of much "Native" law, and so on. At the same time the disruptive tendencies create problems of control for the capitalist state, and these are met by a vast super-structure of administrative

control, both through the state and through "tribal" authorities. The counterpart of all this is the structure of domination exercised over the African labour force through the pass laws, urban areas acts, police, Bantu administration department, and so on.

In a previous paper (1972) I showed concretely and in some detail how the specific changes in ideology and political policy - the transition from "Segregation" to "Apartheid" reflected changing relationships between the African redistributive economies and the capitalist sector, with particular reference to the supply of cheap labour-power. In brief, the preservation of the conditions (migrant-labour, fixed land area, low capital investment in African agriculture) which enable labour-power to be extracted from the African societies serve to destroy the productive capacity of these societies (given the increase in population, and consequent over-population on the fixed land means, backward farming methods, etc.). The diminution of the product from these Reserve economies generates rural impoverishment, and, also, in the absence of the assumption by the capitalist sector of responsibility for indirect wages, extreme urban impoverishment. The consequence is increasing African pressure on wages and rural conditions, pressure which becomes elaborated into an assault on the whole political and economic structure in the 1940s and 1950s. Apartheid may be seen as the attempt of the capitalist state to maintain the system of cheap migrant-labour in the face of this opposition, by means of the erection of a "perfected" and "modernized" apparatus of political domination.

Although, in this section, the focus has been on the extraction of labour-power by a capitalist mode of production from non-capitalist productive systems, it must be stressed that it is not intended to suggest that this is the only form such a relation may take. I indicated above that imperialism may also operate by appropriating the product of non-capitalist societies, or, indeed, by destroying those societies such that the producers are "freed" of the means of production. These types of relations give rise to varying forms of political domination. (4) It is apparent that it is precisely the changes in the relationships between South African capitalism and non-capitalist modes of production in conditions of a rapid rise (as Legassick [1973] has pointed out) in the organic composition of capital that need to be analysed in the contemporary period.

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#### Notes

- (1) See, for example, Blauner (1969, 1972), Carter et al (1967), Casanova (1965), Frank (1967), Lerumo (1971), Marquard (1957), Simons and Simons (1969), South African Communist Party (n.d.), Stavenhagen (1965).
- (2) Ernesto Laclau, in a personal communication, has pointed out that the unequal exchange of non-equivalents also constitutes an exploitative relation. This, however, in no way affects the general point being made by Bettelheim since an analysis of the class structure of "countries" in a relationship of unequal exchange is no less important than in the case of production relations.

- (3) Stavenhagen (1965) makes a similar analysis in relation to the "corporate" nature of the Indian Community, but he does not articulate the relationship between this and the precise mode of economic exploitation.
- (4) I leave open whether the notion of "internal colonialism" has any proper application in conditions of racial discrimination where, however, the internal relations within the society are overwhelmingly capitalist in nature, that is, where non-capitalist modes of production, if they exist at all, are marginal.

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